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The Editors
FROM CHARISMA
TO LEADERSHIP

ONE DOLLAR

OCTOBER 26, 1979

Celibacy
REFLECTIONS OF A MARRIED MAN

Singleness
DOES IT COUNT ONLY ON SALES CHARTS?
MARY JO WEAVER

&

Refugees
AFRICA'S SHAME AND BURDEN
JAMES I. WASSERSTROM

Radios
SPLITTING EARS SHATTERING CIVILITY
WALTER DONWAY

THE POPE IN IRISH POLITICS
GAMES MILITARY LEADERS PLAY
SCRIPTURE A LA KERMODE
BOLSHOI SKILL VERSUS BOLSHOI PAP
LIFE OF BRIAN, THE RUNNER STUMBLES
MID-LIFE RELIGIOUS CRISES
STUDY OF LITURGY, GRAMMAR OF FAITH
SPANISH CIVIL WAR: THE PEOPLE'S VIEW

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Correspondence

Shucks, it was nothing

Harrisburg, Pa.

To the Editors: I always enjoy each issue of the *Commonweal*, but I must say that I particularly enjoyed your issue of August 31. The tribute to our late and beloved Cardinal Wright was beautiful. And he so well deserved every word of it!

Abigail McCarthy's comments on the contributions made by our new Americans was excellent and gives us a lot to think about, too.

And, in fact, the whole issue was just great!

(JUDGE) GENEVIEVE BLATT

U.S. media, London view

Staten Island, N.Y.

To the Editors: Jack Holland's article on the Ulster Defense Association [August 31], is illuminating beyond anything previously told the American public on this issue.

This article defines the Protestants as British and places the conflict in the political arena where it belongs. . . . Yet, unfortunately, Mr. Holland continues to use the term Protestant to categorize the group he says calls itself British, and the term Catholic for those who call themselves Irish.

This classification of the Irish issue is new to the American press where the Irish conflict has been made to appear as a religious war between the two peoples in the North. This is the official line propagated by the British government. On the other hand, the Irish have always understood the conflict as political, between themselves and the British, to end partition, and to have the British out of the country. The British view gives Britain the opportunity of appearing as a benevolent mediator in a sectarian dispute between two peoples whose ideas are of the 17th century. . . .

The information which the American media gives the American public through its correspondents in London and Belfast, is seen from the British view, and is filtered through the pro-British prejudices which American correspondents seem to acquire shortly after they arrive in Britain. The Irish view is never heard. . . .

A fair solution to the Irish issue, which has been proposed from time to time, and which has been accepted in the Republic of Ireland, but which has had no favorable response in the North, and in Britain, is a federation of the two parts, with autonomy of local government for each part, with a central government for defense and foreign affairs, and the border eliminated. If Britain pushed for this idea among responsible leaders in the North, and gave her support to it, proposing to withdraw from the island, it could very well be the solution to the Irish problem.

On an issue for which Britain is totally responsible, the division and partition of Ireland, Britain is doing nothing to end the conflict and appears to be willing to have it continue indefinitely as it is, while Irish people die.

JOHN BRANIGAN

Doctors & parents

Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y.

To the Editors: Although the Supreme Court's decisions in *Bellotti* and *Parham* are contradictory in many ways, as Maurice Ford points out [Aug. 31], one common element in both was the Court's unannounced support for the good judgment of medical practitioners. In *Bellotti*, the physician may or may not perform an abortion on a minor without parental involvement. In *Parham*, psychiatrists have the final say on committing minors to mental institutions.

The apparent ambivalence of the Court on where to draw the line in support of parental authority reflects, as Mr. Ford points out, the complaint of many observers (often professionals like lawyers, physicians, and social workers) that many parents do not know or cannot be trusted to act in their child's best interest. Unfortunately, neither these observers or the Court go on to ask the sobering next question. Is there any individual or institution that can discern a child's best interest *better* than most parents?

The lamentable state of children in the foster care system, juvenile homes, and mental hospitals suggests that professionals, if anything, do no better than most parents, and probably worse.

MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS
Editor
Hastings Center Report

California dream

Fribourg, Switzerland

To the Editors: A learned friend has long admired for its literary qualities a sentence which appeared in an article of mine entitled "I Remember Chaplin," published in *Commonweal* (June 2, 1972). He recently typed it out and sent it to me. In the sentence I am explaining how it came about that Charlie Chaplin attended the dress rehearsal of a play of mine, *Trial By Fire*, and then returned for the opening the following night in Hollywood. I wrote:

"He came undoubtedly at the suggestion of Herb Sorrell, head of the Conference of Studio Unions which in 1946-47 had waged an epic, if losing, battle for the survival of democratic trade unionism in Hollywood against the combined power of the major producers allied with the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE), still carrying the rancid odor of its history of control by the Chicago Crime Syndicate, and supported by the Screen Actors' Guild headed by Ronald Reagan and George Murphy whose right-wing orientation was already evident, but whose future, one as Governor the other as Senator of a sovereign state of the Union, not even the most clairvoyant tea leaves could have discerned,

(Continued on page 607)

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Staff

Editor: James O'Gara
Executive Editor: Peter Steinfels
Assistant Editors: Daniel M. Murtaugh, David Toolan
Editorial Assistant: Anne Robertson
Columnists: John Garvey, Frank Getlein, Abigail McCarthy, Thomas Powers
Movies: Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.
Poetry: John Fandel
Staff: Karen F. Silva, Harriette Balsky, Jacqueline Reeves
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

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FROM CHARISMA TO LEADERSHIP

NO ONE within reach of a television or a newspaper could have passed the first week in October unaware of the extraordinary personal magnetism of John Paul II and of the intense and enthusiastic response produced by his visit to the United States. The visit was a cascade of dramatic moments—solemn, effervescent ("Rack 'em up, stack 'em up, break 'em in two! Holy Father, we're for you!"), challenging, reflective (the intricately constructed address at the UN), humorous and symbolic (a Southern Baptist president and the Roman pontiff emerging together from the White House). So emotional was the welcome given the pope that, not surprisingly, some observers were troubled. Was this an expression of genuine religious feeling—or the adulation of a superstar among superstars? Did it signify deep attachment to Christian belief—or the spiritual emptiness that provokes quick intoxication with any number of psychological and religious "uppers"? The answer, of course, is all of the above. The pope's visit was many things, and indeed its real meaning may only be established by the answer to the question he left us: how will this charisma be translated into leadership?

In asking that question, we do not want to draw a sharp line between what the pope did—or is—and what he said. One of the most important things about this pontiff is the extent to which the message is the man. That is the way it ought to be for a religious leader, and that such is the pope's opinion as well is revealed not only in his deliberate actions but in the way he preaches, above all, not church nor a set of doctrines but *Christ*. The vitality and spontaneity of John Paul II seem to be as essential a statement about the life of love he urges as any of the specific norms of behavior, whether sexual or economic, he insists upon—and this point the crowds grasped intuitively. But the man has departed, and his message will now be communicated through institutions and persons of a much less electrifying sort. That is why his chosen words are so important.

The pope's pronouncements fell into two categories, his moral, social and political statements directed toward the world at large and his moral and disciplinary statements directed toward the church. Concerning the first, William F. Buckley, Jr., rushed to tape a TV show expressing his distress that the pope—in urging Americans not merely to share the crumbs from their table with the nation's and the world's poor—was treading in economic matters where he had neither expertise nor authority. Others, in contrast, asked whether the pope's words were not merely truisms. If they were truisms, however, so is much of the Gospel. At a time when the possibility of slower economic growth may move people to hold hard to what they possess and avert their gaze from those in need, the pope's admonitions seem particularly appropriate. It is true that our society has always preferred practicing materialism to preaching it, but the new era of tough-mindedness may reverse even that. Here is a writer in the current issue of *Harper's*: "The present rebellion against

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materialism and bigness, however understandable its origins, shrivels the human spirit. People begin by searching for an inner peace, and end by staring vacantly at sunsets. . . .'' To that view, the pope's ''truisms'' are direct contradictions. In some ways, to be sure, John Paul II has been less specific, even though no less emphatic, in his appeals for peace and social justice than were John XXIII and Paul VI. But a document like the UN address, with its careful explication of the interrelationship between spiritual and material rights, is totally beyond the exhortatory. If, as several good reporters concluded, the diplomats at the UN were somewhat perfunctory in their reception of the pope's message, that is not because he said too little but because their diplomatic antennae told them that the papal argument offered no easy comfort for anyone, East or West.

The second category of papal statements, those directed essentially to Catholics, leave us deeply troubled. The pope dealt with a range of issues, often in a swift and assertive manner. Each of them deserves consideration in its own right. The release of priests from their vows, for example, is not the same issue as the future of the celibate priesthood in the Roman rite. Abortion, homosexuality and contraception are separate questions—and the pope has probably contributed to the difficulties already existing in the public debate by appearing to treat them as a piece. Whether the ordination of women poses a question of human rights depends entirely on the grounds for disallowing such ordination. Unless the church presents better reasons against such ordination than have so far been adduced, it is hard to see why human rights are not pertinent any less than if the priesthood were denied to members of certain races or if the church revived its traditional teachings on slavery.

It is not the specific positions taken by the pope on these issues and others—some of which this journal supports, some of which we have long dissented from—but his vision of the teaching church that gives us the most concern. Repeatedly John Paul invoked the image of the ''deposit of truth'' to be safeguarded and effectively communicated as though it were a static, reified reality, a treasure protected and at most given a different display case for every age, rather than a living and growing tradition rooted in history and experience. The validity of the Christian testimony of masses of believers and of disparate local churches seemed to be affirmed only when it matched the view from the top; certainly the pope did not suggest the importance of the reverse process. The insistence of the pope on human rights in his addresses on the secular order found little echo in these statements: only a dismissal of them in connection with women's ordination and a declaration of ''the right of the faithful not to be troubled by theories and hypotheses that they are not expert in judging or that are easily simplified or manipulated by public opinion for ends that are alien to the truth.''

What are the institutional implications of this vision of the teaching church? In an age of fads and media oversimplification, it is not hard to divine some truth in a phrase about ''the right . . . not to be troubled''; but if such a phrase has a ring that seems more fitting to the Polish Communist party than a dissenting Polish religious leader, it is because the institutional behavior based on such phrases more commonly resembles that of authoritarian societies than communities of free and mature believers. The characteristic note of the pope's personal appearances was a loving openness to human cares and experience. If his words are taken as approval of closed and authoritarian church institutions, then the link between charisma and leadership will have been lost. A pilgrimage that was magnificently inclusive will reinforce what, in the church, is militantly exclusive.

There are ready explanations for the pope's attitude. He received poor advice. He wants to take things firmly in hand now so as to be able to exercise greater flexibility later. But the likelier possibility is that he is clearly articulating his particular, heroic vision of the church. That Christ must be central, that love is demanding, that faithfulness requires sacrifice, that drift should be resisted—this should be readily endorsed, however hard to live by. But insofar as his vision minimizes the continuing struggle not only to communicate old truths effectively but, in the light of experience, really discover what the old truths mean; insofar as it encourages a teaching church that is not equally a learning one, the huge promise of his papacy may go unfulfilled.

PAPAL PROSE

The ''Diligence in Research Award'' goes to *Time* for the following sentence: ''His white hair wet and plastered down, John Paul led 300 priests, who waded through ankle-deep mud to hand out 60,000 Communion wafers that twelve nuns in Marlborough, Mass., had baked in a week of twelve-hour days starting each morning at 4:30.''

''What's in a Name Award'' to Religious News Service for its report that at Trinity College's chapel the pope was ''escorted by Cardinal Gregory Baum, archbishop of Washington.''

THE CUBAN CRISIS

True, we *are* sending the Marines to Cuba, but only to the Americanized enclave of Guantanamo. It could be worse—the way the rhetoric in Washington was escalating, they could have been storming ashore at the Bay of Pigs.

If the Soviet Union had newly introduced combat troops into Cuba in an unprecedented move, there would have been cause for national and international concern—much as if the United States had received and accepted an invitation from Poland to station troops inside that country. But it seems quite clear that Soviet troops in Cuba have been there for some years, perhaps as many as seventeen—as Mr. Carter conceded in his address to the nation—training Cubans and perhaps themselves receiving training in jungle warfare for possible Third World use. The only thing that has changed, apparently, is the U.S. intelligence perception of these troops. We don't like to see Soviet troops receiving jungle training ninety miles from the U.S. coast any better than the next man, but it seems that Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko was correct in cal-

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ling the extreme U.S. concern over the troops in Cuba "artificial." From the first irresponsible reaction of Senator Church linking the matter to SALT to the later hyperfervent bombast of Senator Jackson, the "Cuba crisis" seems in fact to have been artificial, existing largely in the minds of the president and other of our leaders in Washington and mishandled from the very first.

Given all this, President Carter's eventual address to the nation was useful enough even though he did not even try to explain the intelligence-gathering failure that was at the root of the crisis. If you had doubts of the U.S.intelligence ability vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, would any part of the Cuban affair reassure you? But aside from this failure, the address was good, calm in tone and non-belligerent, explicitly eschewing a return to the Cold War and rattling the saber no more than he apparently thought was absolutely necessary to appease assorted fire-eating senators. God knows he spoke the sober truth when he said, "the greatest danger to American security is certainly not the two or three thousand Soviet troops in Cuba. The greatest danger to all the nations of the world—including the United States and the Soviet Union—is the breakdown of a common effort to preserve the peace, and the ultimate threat of a nuclear war."

Useful as the president's address was, however, the great Cuban scare has done serious damage to this country's rational handling of foreign policy and has demonstrated the growing power of the new Right in this country. Would the normally responsible Senator Frank Church of the Foreign Relations Committee have taken the chauvinist tack he did if he were not facing a despicable right-wing campaign against him in his bid for reelection in Idaho—a campaign financed by big money raised by the new right-wing masters of direct-mail fund-raising? Faced with this right-wing challenge at home, Senator Church now seems intent on running against Castro the next time around, giving all aid and comfort to those fellow-senators who would hold the SALT treaty hostage to an impossible-to-achieve solution in Cuba. All in all, the Cuban affair obviously represented a failure in intelligence, and in more than one sense of that word.

SMALL FUTURE?

By UN decree, this is the year of the child. Accordingly, Richard H. deLone, a former associate director of the Carnegie Council on Children, has written for his former employer a stinging attack on Great Society educational programs. For the children of the current 25 million poverty-stricken Americans, these programs, we are informed, achieved "small future" (the study's title). Engineered by liberals who focus blame or help on individuals, such policy, deLone argues, ignored harsh economic reality and racial lines which doom millions to a fixed class and make equal opportunity an hallucination. The solution: more government intervention to redistribute power and experience in the social system.

Proposals to restructure the system deserve hearing and debate, which they will receive in these pages. But we hope the conversation will not proceed on the mistaken assumption, shared by all too many tired liberals, conservatives and radical critics, that the war on poverty was a failure. Thus far, the evidence simply does not support this conclusion, nor the picture of American social immobility. In 1976, Sar A. Levitan and Robert Taggart reassessed the data and analyses of 1960s programs and concluded, much against their original suspicions, that the results were impressive. "The 1960s programs and policies and their continuation had a massive, overwhelming beneficial impact and . . . the weight of evidence convincingly supports this view." Moreover, previous studies of social mobility in the U.S. by Stephen Thernstrom and again by Peter Blau and Otis Dudley Duncan point to the significant effect of education in enabling children to transcend their social origins. These judgments of modest success in equalizing power and experience surely do not justify complacency. For if the number of the other America is now down from 39 million in 1960, there are still 25 millions suffering from chronic impoverishment. But neither does the mixed record of the Great Society warrant the timidity and negativism that currently retard needed and possible progress in achieving equal opportunity for all young Americans. As Carl Sandburg observed, "A child is God's opinion the world should go on."

Report from Ireland

THE POPE & POLITICS

TWO SALLIES INTO SENSITIVE AREAS

IN ALL ITS EXTERNALS the pope's visit to Ireland, as his subsequent one to the U.S., was an incredible success. American readers who saw the U.S. gatherings, either personally or on television, will have no need for descriptions of the Irish occasions—the huge crowds (it is reckoned that half the 4.6 million people in the whole island attended one or other of the ceremonies), their patient good-humor, their rapport with the pope, the moving incidents which brought tears to his and many other eyes, such as when he told 250,000 young people at Galway that he loved them and they cheered him deliriously for 12 solid minutes. "The magnetic Pole," as a television production assistant called him, won all hearts.

So caught up were the crowds with the emotion of the occasions that, for the most part, the content of the pope's messages did not register. It was enough that he was there with them: what he was saying in his slow, measured addresses could be thought about later.

To the extent that the medium is the message, the pope's own personality will inevitably play some part in the way his words will be studied and applied. "I don't think I'm going to like everything he said," one of the stewards remarked as the papal plane left. "But it won't be the same as with a remote pope speaking in Rome. I have seen the pope here and felt very

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close to him. That will affect the way I examine and judge his message."

One main theme ran through the five major addresses he made in Ireland—the dignity of the human person. Injustice and violence weaken the moral fiber of a nation, he told the biggest crowd of his visit in Dublin. Killing degrades you, he told the IRA. Materialism will corrupt you if you allow it to, he told Irish youth. Do not demean your calling by yielding to secularism, he told priests, religious and seminarians. Respect human life from conception to death, he told Irish families.

This was the positive thrust running through his closely-linked series of addresses. But these are general exhortations and the Irish, whatever other virtues they possess, are not philosophers. They prefer practical admonitions.

And the pope did not disappoint them. He told them what to do—go to Confession frequently; pray fervently; say the Rosary; wear distinctive, non-secular clothing if you are a priest or nun; do not practice contraception; oppose the legalizing of divorce; abominate abortion. The old Scottish song, "Will ye no' come back again," which the crowds sang to his departing helicopter, might have been his own theme song, admonishing "Ireland *semper fidelis*," to return to her traditional Christian doctrines, disciplines and practices.

Of course, this is a superficial and incomplete account of what the pope said in Ireland. His speeches were solid and read better than they sounded. Inevitably, however, only a minority of people will read through the dense columns of type to study and analyze the text. Most will be content with what they heard over the fitful public address systems or on radio and television.

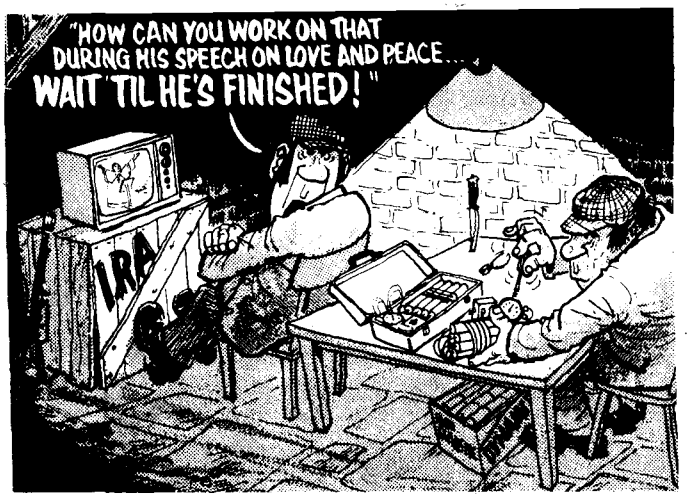
The visit had been described as a "pastoral" one, so the emphasis on religious observance was to be expected from a pope known to be conservative in outlook (though the degree of his conservativeness is, perhaps, better known now). What had not been anticipated was that the pope would venture so deeply into two political minefields. One he negotiated with superb skill: the other triggered off some muffled explosions which will undoubtedly produce future eruptions.

The first political intervention was at Drogheda, where the pope made his impassioned plea to the IRA: "On my knees, I beg you to turn away from the paths of violence and return to the ways of peace. . . . Further violence in Ireland will only drag down to ruin the land you claim to love and the values you claim to cherish."

Condemnation of violence had been expected. But the pope went further. He admonished sympathizers with extremists not to allow their moral sense and Christian conviction to be blunted by the "lie of violence." He championed the rights of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland: "Each human community—ethnic, historical, cultural, or religious—has rights which must be respected. Peace is threatened every time these rights are violated."

He called for a new "peaceful political initiative" in Northern Ireland so that the politicians could prove that peaceful means and not violence could solve injustices.

The Irish Government was delighted with what it interpreted



as full papal support for its policy on Northern Ireland, which is to press for a devolved government formed from representatives of both Protestant and Catholic communities. Ulster Unionists grudgingly found words of praise for the pope's courageous and balanced views (though the Rev. Ian Paisley, predictably, branded the pope as a hypocrite, an anti-Christ and a liar). Mrs. Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, announced that her government was working to find a way of giving the people of Northern Ireland more responsibility for their own affairs and their own future.

But all the other parties addressed by the pope were peripheral to his central approach—the plea to the IRA to stop their campaign. And here the pope failed. The IRA's military wing bluntly rejected his plea, claiming that it had "widespread support" for its campaign and that "force is the only means of removing the evil of the British presence in Ireland." The political wing was a little more subtle. It said it wanted direct contact with the pope to discuss the Northern Ireland problem and welcomed his "genuine interest in achieving true peace based on justice."

Despite the IRA's rejection of his plea, the pope's Drogheda address was the unqualified success of his Irish visit. The reception he got from a crowd which was made up mainly of Northern Ireland Catholics provided unchallengeable evidence of the rejection of violence by the Irish people and their deep longing for peace. By refusing even a ceasefire or a temporary truce to give the politicians another chance to find a nonviolent way of ending injustice and sectarian division, the IRA misjudged the mood of the people.

The pope's second sally into the political area was less enthusiastically received. Ireland, after years of agonizing and party political convolutions, recently passed a bill to legalize the sale of contraceptives (though only to married persons and only on a doctor's prescription). And there have been moves to call a referendum to remove from the Constitution Article 41.3.2 which provides that "no law shall be enacted providing for the grant of a dissolution of marriage."

So for the pope to call for "generous openness to accept children from God" and for respect for "the God-given cycle of life" was seen as a clear admonition against contraception

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and a rebuke to the government's new legislation. And for the pope to say that "the very possibility of divorce in the sphere of civil laws makes stable and permanent marriages more difficult for everyone" and to call on the Irish always to support marriage "through personal commitment and through positive social and legal action" was seen as a deliberate political intervention of a kind which the Irish bishops themselves would no longer attempt on their own.

Was this, perhaps, the background to the pope's seeming off-handedness with the Taoiseach, Mr. Jack Lynch, who got less notice than any of the bishops who, in turn, got much less notice than any uncomprehending infant thrust forward for a papal kiss or bear-hug?

In the euphoria of the occasion, the religious correspondent of one newspaper estimated that it would be a hundred years before the full significance of the pope'e addresses become apparent. He was about a century out. Even as the Aer Lingus "St. Patrick" was taxiing on the Shannon tarmac for the flight to Boston, a television commentator was reflecting on the pope's "controversial" statements on contraception and divorce. For "controversial" read "startling" or even "shocking." The significance had escaped nobody.

What the long-term response of the Irish people will be is another matter. The pope has shown quite clearly that he believes in strong leadership and that his view of collegiality involves not only recognition that the other bishops share responsibility for the whole church with him but that he shares responsibility for their dioceses as well. He has thus given the principle of collegiality a new dimension which will have major consequences for the church.

The Irish bishops are, of course, gratified by the success of the visit and by the pope's reinforcement of the views they themselves have promulgated, somewhat less forcibly, in recent years. They now plan a pastoral program. "Handing on the Faith in the Home," designed to encourage parents to share more fully in the religious education of their children.

Undoubtedly, the bishops, following the pope's lead, see this as a way of reviving the traditional forms of belief and the devotional practices which have marked Irish Catholicism. It is not certain that they will succeed. Ireland is far more of a pluralist society than seemed to be envisaged in the pope's admonition to its people, such as to "love the land; love the work of the fields."

The apparent concept of the Irish as a rural and, therefore, ingenuous people hardly fits the reality. Ireland is rapidly industrializing, and the commercialism and materialism against which the pope warned are challenges which must be confronted rather than escaped from.

One well-known Irish commentator privately summed up the pope's "mistake" as "his assumption that the Irish religious and spiritual experience is as monochrome as that in his own native Poland. We have a more pluriform and variegated religious and cultural background. Whoever advised the pope did not take that into account."

There is a belief in Ireland that if Senator Edward Kennedy becomes U.S. president, the pope will make another visit there and come again to Ireland en route, though next time to the North. By then, the effects of his first visit will be more clear-cut.

DESMOND FISHER

(Desmond Fisher is Commonweal*'s regular correspondent in Ireland.)*

Of several minds: *Frank Getlein*

NAME OF THE GAME

FROM DOMINOES TO LIONEL TRAINS

THEY'VE DONE it again. Once more the Pentagon has got the wrong name of the game they're playing. Since we pay for their play, our bills will be higher than they need have been to give the generals, admirals and contractors their salutary workouts.

Last time, you may recall, they called it "dominoes," in the curious belief that dominoes was played by lining up the numbered pieces, totally ignoring the numbers, and knocking down the first to knock down all the others.

Well, bless them, dominoes turned out not to be played like that at all. Dominoes turned out to be played by matching the numbers, one to one, and trying to get rid of all your pieces before the opponent gets rid of his. Never occurred to the Pentagon that's how you play dominoes. They kept lining them up and waiting for someone to make a flick.

Worse, it never occurred to the Pentagon that the other folks weren't playing dominoes at all. They were playing Go, the well-known Asiatic game, highly unstructured, in which equally valued stones are placed to surround and cut off equally valued stones of the opposition. In the event, that's what happened to the U.S. presence in Vietnam, but when it did Kissinger and Ford were still waiting for the non-existent dominoes to drop. Interpreting recent Kissingerian statements as a statesman without a state, one can only believe he still is waiting for the domino drop, while Ford wants only to be acquitted of knowing anything that was going on in Cuba when he was president.

So here they are again. On the front page of the *N.Y. Times*, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown fronts for his band of renown, the Joint Chiefs, explaining how the diagram of three Lionel toy train layouts will bamboozle the dread Russians into not knowing where the MX missiles actually are and thus reduce Soviet adventurism to Alice-Sit-by-the-Fire out of sheer frustration.

President Jimmy Carter, like Brown a cheerful Charlie McCarthy for the Pentagon's brass and braid, is quoted in the

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story as saying, "The system will make it clear to the Soviet Union that they will gain no strategic advantage out of continuing a nuclear arms race."

It's so simple the wonder is no one thought of it before now. The MX "system," in case you don't see the *Times*, is that of missiles on a merry-go-round. Every single missile, according to the diagram, is on a track with some two dozen holes into which the missile may be popped. The theory is that as the missile goes round and round, where it will land nobody knows, least of all the Soviets, who must be assumed to be at least as dumb as the Joint Chiefs, which is plenty.

I personally think this is fine, a lot more fun than anything I've heard from the Pentagon since the light at the end of the tunnel. But as with those damnable dominoes, the Joint Chiefs and their front men have got the name of the game wrong. All it takes is one look at the diagrams to know we are dealing with Lionel toy trains of 30 to 60 years ago, but the Joint Chiefs and their spokespersons keep insisting the diagram is that of a "race track."

No doubt the words "race track" are comforting to those who want to keep the arms race going faster ever faster, and there is no particular reason to believe that race is going to do anything else, but the plain fact is that the diagrams are those of timeless Lionel toy train sets, not those of any race track any railbird would risk two dollars on even across the board. The difference is that the diagrams, like the Lionels, have a connecting line right across the middle of the loosely oval overall layout.

That's Lionel, all right, but it sure as heck isn't Pimlico or Laurel. In fact, that mid-connecting arm could be the clue as to why the White House thinks of this course as a "racetrack." There is a form of junk-car racing in the Southern mountains, practiced by good ole boys between bootleg runs and presidential advisory runs which has exactly that mid-connection, put there to allow one good ole car to bang into another good ole car as hundreds cheer.

Outside goin'-to-the-levy-and-the-levy-is-dry country, however, the Pentagon diagrams, or Pentagrams, printed in the *Times* are toy train layouts and the realization that they are makes a lot of things clear. The whole panoply of super-arms has always had a toy-train aspect to it for game players like Kissinger, Nixon, interchangeable Joint Chiefs and the unspeakable Haig. For folks like that, it's all game playing and it doesn't matter much what the game is called as long as you can trade in your chips for new chips when the game changes from, for instance, burglary to memoir-writing, eavesdropping to TV entertaining, the discernment of "sinister forces" wiping out Nixon's incriminating eighteen minutes on tape to the discernment of the dread Russians arriving right here in River City where I'll take the nomination for Senator, President, First Selectman, what you will, to turn back the awful threat.

Putting completely out of mind the fact that Lionel trains at one point passed into the control of the principal survivor of the Joe McCarthy team, we nevertheless recall that those good ole trains rolled past villages, churches, schools, police stations, all of which lighted up on cue, rolled through mountain tunnels supporting magical chalets of love from which to gaze down on the Jungfrau, rolled around the sort of track Secretary Brown gets himself photographed with for the MX.

We can therefore reasonably expect a certain amount of built-in special effects to take place when the MX goes rollin' by. At a track juncture, for instance, it is not improbable that the Joint Chiefs will appear as if by magic through a tin door flung open to shower the passing MX with thousand-dollar bills. When the train emerges from the tunnel, hauling the long-lost light behind it, surely Jimmy Carter will pop out of a sentry-box and cry, "The Soviet Union will gain no strategic advantage out of continuing a nuclear arms race."

I wonder if we could get that in writing. Not from a transient president who signifies fourteen months, at most five years, but from every West Point graduate now ranked from 2d Lt. to Lt. Col., all of whom taken together signify the next half century and, without such a pledge, a continuing raid on the Treasury that makes Harry Dougherty look abstemious.

If we could and if we could hold them to it, the price would be cheap, however expensive the MX and its Lionel tracks in Utah and Nevada turn out to be. Once and for all! That's been the dream of all of us with each new bankrupting missile the Secretaries of Defense, the Joint Chiefs, the Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs, the Miracle Workers, the Captured Nazi Geniuses, the Hawk Columnists, whoever, have come up with. If you just bankrupt yourselves this one more time, you'll never have to do it again, has been the repeated promise with each new advance in missilery. Somehow, the high costs of each new advance never seemed to have much effect on Joint Chiefs, Captured Nazi Geniuses or Hawk Columnists, all of whom flourished and prospered the more the rest of us went bankrupt to support their impossible dreams. And the more we went bankrupt, the less security the new device turned out to have brought us. Somehow, those crazy Soviets, instead of recognizing insurmountable superiority when they saw it, saw only a challenge to whomp up their missilery and did so. Thank Heaven, at last the President himself has said that with the merry-go-round missiles, the Soviets will as last see that they're in a losing game. Can we doubt that they'll do so?

A small bit of added perspective was added the following day in the *Times*. On the back page of the theater section appeared an advertisement for a desk top toy train for the harried executive. "When the deal falls through," the copy proclaimed, when all about are losing their heads and blaming it onto you, in short, when the executive world is a lot less than it's cracked up to be, turn your back on it and run the toy train around your desk top until you feel better.

Exactly. That's what the MX merry-go-round missiles are really all about. We're all entitled to a bit of unreality from time to time. For the Commander-in-Chief of the Military Forces of the Western World, what better than toy trains loaded with missiles: boyhood's dream plated with adult armor against the real world. FRANK GETLEIN

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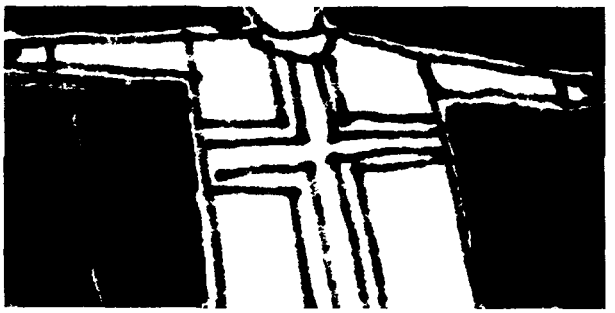
OUR CULTURE REGARDS VOWS AS ANACHRONISMS



A married layman on celibacy

JOHN GARVEY

FOR YEARS celibate Catholic priests have spoken to Catholic married people about marriage. Some of what they have had to say is valuable, even at times helpful in a practical way. When their advice rings false, it is frequently discounted by married people on the grounds that the speaker, not having experienced marriage, couldn't really be expected to be authoritative. (This has been especially true in the area of sex. Couples whose marriages are at all happy know that sexual intercourse is a good deal more than a reproductive necessity, and in a happy marriage it is never primarily that; it is similarly not just a remedy for concupiscence. In fact, nothing seems to remedy concupiscence. If anyone has a cure short of Origen's, it would be kind to let the rest of us know.)

In a similar spirit, I would like to offer this reflection on celibacy. I have observed priests, monks and nuns from childhood on, and know many quite well. Just as priests have offered the argument that an impartial observer of marriage can sometimes be a more qualified commentator than someone intimately involved, so perhaps a married layman might have something of value to say; and I invite the celibate reader to discount whatever seems unauthoritative or not quite to the point.

It has been pointed out that celibacy is under attack from the culture at large, and the discussion of a married clergy has in some cases been confused with a call to abolish celibacy altogether. I should make it clear at the outset that I regard celibacy as an important thing; where it is genuine, it is a gift to the church. I am not concerned here with celibacy as a *sine qua non* for the priesthood, but with the vow itself.

And this is where we must begin, because there is something essential in the fact that celibacy is a *vowed* state, not simply a condition like being single by choice or by accident; and in this it is like marriage. This is important, because vows, in or out of marriage, are increasingly regarded as less than central. I don't mean to suggest that those who seek a dispensation from vows—those of the professed celibate religious or those of marriage—are to be condemned for doing so; but it should be clear that what they are being dispensed from is ideally a binding and (to use an unfashionable word) absolute thing. The Latin roots of the word *vow* are also found in the words *devoted* and *devotion*. The devoted person is the person of the vow. There may be perfectly good reasons for which an individual would look for a dispensation from a vow; but the possibility of dispensation should not make a vow seem at the start to be optional, something to be backed away from when things don't come up to expectations. Half-devotion is a contradiction in terms. There must be a whole-heartedness about undertaking the vowed life in any state; and it is a whole-heartedness which will simply have to be willed at times, especially in those dark times when there is no apparent reason to go on.

Western culture in recent years has tended to regard the idea of the vow as an anachronism based upon unreasonable expectations. A culture which is increasingly geared towards self-fulfillment and present satisfaction is not likely to be very sensitive in the way it looks at any vow. Vowing is, in a way, always done in the dark. It is an act of faith and hope: faith that what the vow entails is possible, and hope that the resources to make it possible will be there. There is something profoundly unreasonable about a vow—unreasonable here meaning beyond reason, not irrational. Any healthy young man or woman who takes a vow of celibacy, believing that he or she knows everything that the vow will involve, will be proved wrong. A couple who marry usually do not, at the time of their marriage, know one another very well. (They may think they do, but in retrospect they find out how wrong they were.) The young celibate, or the young husband or wife, knows enough about the life being undertaken to be willing to stake everything on the vow; but this is where the darkness begins, because we really do not know everything that will be asked of us.

The obvious question here is, why do it at all? If there is an alternative to risking everything, why take the risk?

JOHN GARVEY *contributes a regular column to* Commonweal. *The above article is reprinted from* Doctrine and Life, *an Irish theological journal.*

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The answer, I think, is that without the vow we are much less likely to be led into the fullness of our humanity, which is a divine fullness. We will remain only human.

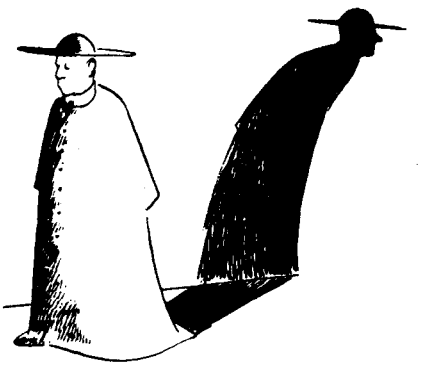
A vow is a symbol. Like all symbols, it has the power to evoke more than a merely rational, calculated response. To give your word before God that you will accept a vowed life, with anything it might involve, is an act of profound trust, which—if the vow is lived truly—draws you out of yourself, and draws from you responses and capabilities which you didn't know were there. To vow is to step into a larger life than the life you control and manipulate. Any part of the self which holds back poisons the vow, and makes living it that much more difficult. Vows are considered less than central to the business of being a human today because of the individualism which pervades Western culture: unless something can be shown to be of obvious and more or less immediate benefit to the individual, its value is questioned. The vow challenges this mentality by suggesting that self-fulfillment and personal freedom, good as they are, are not only not enough to make for a good life; a life which sets them as goals is too small a life. As Christians we are called to something larger and stranger than the life the world offers us; we are called to a deeper life, which discloses itself during the course of our life and is fulfilled at death. This, anyway, is our hope, the risk we take, and our evidence, such as it is, is to be found in the lives of people who went before us and lived well.

But if a vow, whether of marriage or of celibacy, calls us out of ourselves to a larger life—a participation in God's own life—what, specifically, does the vow of celibacy tell about that life? Marriage is easier to understand, certainly. The desires for companionship, lovemaking and children are universal and require no explanation. Within marriage there is the possibility of a knowing and a being known which is so archetypical of the soul's relationship to God that it is a recurrent theme in mystical literature (and of course, just as in the life of prayer, the knowing and being known involved in marriage can be humiliating and uncomfortable). Paul compares the love of one spouse for another to the love of Christ for the church. In marriage the natural and the supernatural meet wonderfully.

But celibacy? That's the strange one. There is not much in the Judaism from which Christianity sprang to make room for it. The monastic Essene community included celibates; but this was never common or encouraged in Judaism. The religions outside of Christianity which maintain celibate traditions tend either to deny or undervalue the goodness of the world. Yet in our tradition, which says firmly that the world is good, that sex and procreation are good, that pleasure well-taken is loved by God, there is this bunch of men and women who do not marry, who are pledged to a life of abstinence from sex.

THERE IS nothing obviously good or healthy about celibacy. That alone should be looked at, because we live in an in-between time. We are close enough to a Christian culture, in which celibacy was generally accepted, to be blinded to its strangeness, and at the same time we are distant from any common understanding which could allow celibacy to be seen as the shocking and necessary thing it is. The development of this understanding matters as much as anything else, if we are to see celibacy clearly. Consider this: celibacy seen as *desirable* would be neurotic, or selfish, or both. A person who refrains from marriage because he or she is afraid of the intimacy involved in marriage, or can't be bothered with it, or who does not want to be troubled by the burden of another person, or who does not want to be saddled with children, has made an ungenerous choice, a choice to be less than fully human. This is not at all what celibacy should be like.

Jesus says that celibacy is undertaken for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven by those whose hearts can bear it; it is not demanded of all his followers, as some gnostics claimed. How does celibacy serve the kingdom? If, as Jewish and Christian



tradition insists, creation is good, what is good or holy about renouncing the goodness of marriage and parenthood? The radical nature of celibacy demands the renunciation of something wholly good—a fact which presents us with a paradox.

Most explanations of celibacy try, one way or another, to resolve this paradox. There is, for example, the argument that the celibate is more available, more able to give himself to those in need, because he is not tied down to wife and child; in this way he is devoted wholly to the Kingdom in a way that married people cannot be.

I don't find this convincing. For one thing, I have yet to meet a celibate whose celibacy had directly to do with his availability. By this I do not mean that I haven't met genuinely generous celibates—I have. But they were not *more* generous than the generous doctors I have known, or the generous married couples whose homes have been havens for many people, whose lives are open to those in need at every moment. And while there are kinds of work in which celibacy is, in a practical sense, more convenient (for example, the constant work of Mother Teresa with Calcutta's dying, or the work of many others with the poor), even this kind of work has at times been done selflessly by married couples. An argument from practicality, it seems to me, sells celibacy short.

ANOTHER ARGUMENT is that the celibate, in committing his love to no particular person, is free to love everyone. But this contradicts the experience of love by making it a rationed thing, as if having spent 75 litres of love on one's wife and children, one had only 25 litres of God's allotment left for the

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rest of the race. In fact, by learning to love one other person deeply, one learns to love every other person that much more deeply. The love that a man and woman have for one another and for their children is, if it is Christian, carried into the rest of their lives and into every other relationship. Unless a person is capable of loving one other person deeply—and this is as true of celibates as it is of married people—he is not capable of loving *anyone*, much less everyone. There is nothing at all abstract about love; the Incarnation should teach us that much. And John reminds us that if we cannot love the one we see before us, we cannot love God, who cannot be seen.

Still another and more recent argument is that the celibate combines in himself both male and female elements, exhibiting a wholeness which others must seek in the opposite sex. But this also falls short of experience. In a good marriage, a man and woman learn from one another's differences. "Masculine" and "feminine" attributes (which are increasingly seen as stereotypical, when they are gendered that way) must come together in any mature individual, celibate or married.

The paradoxical nature of celibacy should not be explained away or made to look like a practical and beneficial thing. I believe it was Cardinal Suhard who said that as Christians we should live in such a way that, if God did not exist, our lives would make no sense. I am sure he did not mean that we are meant to put on a sort of show for the sake of the world, but rather meant to point out the risk of true Christianity: finally, you have to put everything on the line. It is unfortunate that asceticism has come to have such a bad name in recent years; perhaps this bad name is the inevitable reaction to the misrepresentation of asceticism to which many of us were exposed, which made it seem a simple hatred of the flesh. It is unfortunate, because only within the context of a refreshed sense of the ascetic can celibacy make sense.

Celibacy is a kind of fast. Like fasting from food and drink, like voluntary poverty, it makes no worldly sense. It makes sense only if God is real. Like fasting and voluntary poverty, celibacy is a witness to a life which is more profoundly *real* than the life offered by the world. Celibacy has no worldly justification (and this is why practical, sensible arguments in its favor sell it short, just as the argument that fasting is good for the figure misses the point of fasting), but it makes sense in the context of the reality of God's kingdom. Like fasting, it involves a focus that there are priorities which demand radical responses. Like voluntary poverty, it may have to be a lifelong thing to bear the fruit it is meant to bear.

How are any of these things helpful? Fasting, like celibacy, means refraining from something good. It is a way of affirming that God alone is enough, is in fact everything, and it helps focus our attention on God. During a fast we are reminded continuously (and sometimes uncomfortably) of what our lives are really about. The person who lives in radical simplicity, giving away what he does not need, has in a similar way put his life on the line.

Celibacy is in the same way a witness to the wholeheartedness the Gospel demands. This singleness must be present in every Christian life, not just the life of the celibate; but celibacy helps to illuminate it, to throw it into relief. It is easy to say, for example, that I am ready to drop everything for the sake of the Kingdom, that once my hand is on the plow I will not turn back. It is willingness that matters, of course; but never to see that willingness tested can lead us into self-deception, which is a lesson fasting can teach us. At the level of the community, celibacy offers the same sort of witness to the married Christian. It is a manifestation of the fact that there is a love which suffices absolutely, and it is offered to each single human being, as well as to the community.

This love is what celibacy reveals, or should reveal. It is obviously not an easy witness to bear, as Jesus himself said, and it is certainly not for everyone. It is a negative thing, in that it means self-denial, and at times whatever good it may offer will be invisible to the person who endures the loneliness which is an inevitable part of celibacy, for anyone with enough heart to love. The person who fasts from food will be hungry, and the person who fasts from sex, and the long intimate companionship of marriage, and from parenthood, will experience intense loneliness. Just as marriage and parenthood have their dark moments (there is no distance so lonely as the distance which can occur between two people who love one another, and a child's serious illness involves parents in an agony with which others may sympathize, but which can be shared only by someone who has gone through the same agony) so celibacy has a depth of loneliness which must be acknowledged, not to get it out of the way—that can't be done—but to bring it to healing, by allowing the community to share as much of the burden as can be shared, and by asking the community to be available during the darkest moments.

HERE IT IS important to realize that one danger of celibacy is the myth of self-sufficiency. The celibates I know who live it well are, not at all coincidentally, the ones who are capable of forming deep friendships, and who never give the sense of having erected protective emotional barriers. Many of them are members of religious orders, who come from communities human enough to provide their members with the mutual support and companionship which all of us must receive from our families and friends. I point this out because of the chilling barrenness too often encountered in rectories and convents, and in individual celibates whose inability to deal with the simplest heartfelt emotion is pitiful. A sour celibacy is at least as scandalous and hurtful to the community as a bad marriage.

In the Eastern churches it has been the typical practice to ordain married men, leaving celibacy to monks, from whom the bishops are chosen. This ancient discipline points up two things which the Western church may have forgotten. One is that celibacy, like the monastic life, is a radical choice. The other is that it must be situated in an ascetic, contemplative context. Celibacy without asceticism and prayerfulness could become the most refined, subtle selfishness in the world. Perhaps Catholicism in the past did overemphasize the cross, suffering, and self-denial. But excluding these Christian facts is not the remedy; it is rather a surrender to the cultural

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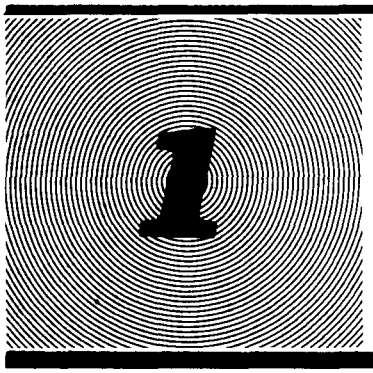
surroundings that will only allow the sort of religion that fits in, the religion which reinforces the picture the world wants to have of itself. C.S. Lewis once remarked that there is always a tendency to warn an age against the danger into which it is least likely to fall; so in a puritanical age we are warned against licentiousness, and in a licentious age we are warned against puritanism. It isn't the dangers of asceticism that the Western world needs to fear right now.

There is one final, pastoral aspect of celibacy which I would like to mention. There are people who remain unmarried and unloved because they have not been able, for whatever reasons, to attract anyone. In looking at a married person someone in this situation is able to say, "He couldn't possibly understand my loneliness—he lives in such security, the security of being loved." The fact that the other person is loved stands as a barrier between them. The celibate can reveal to someone this lonely a love which can be healing, and can restore a meaning and dignity which the world denies.

Celibacy seen only as a "state in life" is as cold as ice, just as dead as a marriage which exists only as a pledge on paper. It must exhibit the love it is based in, the paradoxical strength in weakness of which Paul boasts, or it will be worthless.



THE PAIN OF NEGATIVE DEFINITIONS

Single blessedness?

MARY JO WEAVER

ONE HEARS a good deal about singleness today because many people are either living alone or in "arrangements" that are not marriage. Some people choose to be single and others find themselves that way by accident or tragedy. I am interested in how people perceive and react to singleness in the Christian church, i.e., in terms of religion and family.

I grew up in a tradition where there was an institution of dedicated singleness. It was called monastic (or religious) life, was open to both men and women and thought to be assuredly superior to the *other* state in life, marriage. In marriage one was dedicated, too, but it was different; a lot of the time that could have been dedicated to God was dedicated to the spouse and one's many children. There was little room in theory or in practice for an *un*dedicated life—people were either to bind themselves to God or to a family—singleness without the curbs of public vows and community was considered unseemly and footloose. And dangerous. Not that there were not old maids ("poor things") who had never been asked either by a man or by God to dedicate herself to him—the problem did not lie in the sad failures of a few old maids. The problem (or puzzlement) lay in the idea that one would choose to be single, want to lead a lonely, undedicated, peculiar life. The assumption was that something was wrong with such a person. In the old days, the wrongness was assaulted by novenas or by an arrangement made by the girl's father. Today the pious may still storm heaven but most people turn to psychologists to find out what's wrong. The underlying assumption is the same: being single is not normal.

The singleness issue is not a major problem until one gets past the frontier of thirty. This is especially true for women, whose ability to reproduce is bound up with their age. Before thirty one can be considered in a state of creative indecision between one of the two states in life; after thirty one finds oneself much less safe from pressing inquiry and rude assumption. Single people who wish to remain single can only hope that people will catch on and tire of: finding dinner partners for them, wondering/asking/assuming things about their sexual orientation, picturing their lives as the media do (as "swinging"), dropping broad hints about how they might make their lives more "meaningful," and feeling sorry for them because they do not have the proper nesting instincts.

Single people are often defined negatively, i.e., as *un*married. We all know what they are *not*—they are not "two in one flesh" but single/alone. It is not good to be alone. The context for understanding the present perceptions of singleness includes at least five areas: the nuclear family, sexual openness, social convention, the churches and the marketplace.

1. *Nuclear family.* In pre-industrial society marriage and family were necessary to keep the society going and at that time there was not much room for single people to be "alone." People who did not marry either stayed at home or went into some kind of religious community. There was a need for dedicated singleness—the great centers of learning were monastic; hospitals, orphanages and other agencies of social concern were often managed and staffed by sisters. There was a utilitarian and religious reason for singleness; tasks of service appeared to require celibacy. One of the advantages of that arrangement was that families had a place for singles. Today, the nuclear family has no room for single people. At the same

MARY JO WEAVER *is an assistant professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Indiana University.*

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time, marriage has changed somewhat in character. With fewer children, less pressing physical labor and more leisure, couples find that they have more time for each other. They also have higher expectations of one another and some students of social change speculate that the pressures of companionate marriage significantly affect the divorce rate. I wonder if having more single people around (not necessarily living with) the family might have good results for everyone. I do not think that people who are married need think that they are doing single people a favor by inviting them more intimately into the family; it would be interesting if they could envision it as doing themselves a favor.

One of the curious problems singles have concerns their homes. In the common mind single people have no homes. They are not considered to have a family in any conventional sense and therefore can have no family place, i.e., no home. When someone asks a single person where "home" is and that person answers with the town she or he is living in, the questioners often respond with, "Oh no, not that, I mean your *home*," by which of course they mean one's parents' home.

2. *Sexual openness*. In a world of sexual openness single people who are *not* "swingers" are often caught between rejection and suspicion. People who swing are not overjoyed with the company of someone who does not, and single people who do not thrive on the sexual playground are generally not attracted to certain kinds of parties, apartment complexes and lifestyles. Conservative people, under the avalanche of confessional talk shows and cinema assumptions, may buy into the cultural hype about sex and think that everyone is doing *something*. It is often hard for conservative people to be anything but suspicious of singles. Whether and what single people do sexually is not at issue here; the point is that since people do not know, they assume (often wrongly and needlessly) that a single person sleeps around, is gay or hamstrung with sexual hangups. If single people, motivated by some religious or utilitarian ideal (as Gandhi was or Jesus was) are living a celibate life, they get little support from any quarter of the culture.

3. *Social convention*. Social conventions do not make room for singles. There is little place for singles in a married culture or in a religious community one. Those single people who cluster around religious centers, even sometimes becoming "third order" members, find themselves ultimately excluded because they are not really part of the group. Married people seem to have trouble inviting them to dinner without finding someone of the opposite sex to balance out the couples and so simulate normalcy. For a variety of reasons, some married people are uncomfortable around single people—they often do not know what to say to someone who doesn't share the range of familial problems (children's dental work, teenage rebellion) that cement intimacy among couples. Single people are not welcome at some parties because it is assumed that they are on the make and, by definition, disruptive. Professional single women often find that they have more in common with the men at a party than with their wives and are caught between having a good time and a safe one.

4. *Churches*. Single people are treated as people with a "problem" by the churches that are, for the most part, highly oriented to families. If the family is in some trouble in the larger society, it is not in trouble in the church, the last great stronghold of family idolatry. If churches do recognize single people at all, they tend to organize events for them in order that they can meet and marry and therefore fit into the life of the church. So far as the churches are concerned, single people do not have a morally valid position. This is odd since I think it could be argued from the New Testament that singleness is the first normal state for every Christian and that there is no Christian imperative to get married or to prefer marriage. Jesus and Paul both relativize the need to marry—it is not, for Christians, *the* most important life option. In that situation, the burden of proof falls on the married rather than on the single; singleness becomes a duty until the reasons for marriage are made clear.

5. *Marketplace*. In the marketplace singleness has now been married to the new consumerism, what one weekly newsmagazine called the "tea for one market." Where singleness used to be shameful it is now shameless in its pursuit of pleasure and the good life. Singles are marketplace targets, they have mobility, few responsibilities and more money to spend. The one segment of society in which they are taken with utter seriousness is Madison Avenue—singles represent substantial sales. The single person who is not a high-level consumer has little chance to be perceived as wanting to lead a simple life. As the media have it, the problems of single people lie predominately in securing a proper credit rating, designing their own homes and finding a vintage sportscar. Single people, when they are written up in magazines, are synonymous with the leisure class—they all have lounging robes, expensive dogs and suntans.

The context, therefore, is incredulous and puzzled at best and hostile at worst. People with strong assumptions about what define a home and family are not presently ready to understand singleness sympathetically. Singles are a problem to the churches and to conventional social situations and an opportunity for manufacturers. People who do not fit into the current context, who consider that they have a home of their own, a private sex life (or none); who would like to be able to move easily in a variety of social circles, be tapped as a resource by the churches; and who deny the assumptions of the marketplace—those people are stuck.

THE REASON singleness is a question is because we insist upon seeing people in relation to their life's arrangements rather than in terms of who they are. I do not want to deny that the way we choose to live our lives and with whom has a significant effect on who we are; but I do want to argue that the kinds of things necessary to growth and maturity are the same for all people and are provided in marriage and community life but often are not available to singles. The question needs to be posed in terms of maturity or authenticity or wholeness, not in terms of singleness *per se*—my interest is not with whom we are (or are not) living but who we are.

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There are at least four canons against which one can measure maturity or wholeness: flexibility, ability to relate to a stable community of intimacy, concern for others as opposed to ego-centricity, and security, especially in its relation to death. Marriage and community provide the opportunities for people to grow in all areas and the assumption is that people ought to grow in these areas. Singles have the same needs, but often do not have much support from people in these areas. Worse, married and community people often perceive single people as those people who have no needs or desires beyond themselves.

1. *Flexibility*. Mentally healthy people are flexible and open to possibility; rigidity is not thought to be a good attribute. In marriage and in intentional communities there is an opportunity, at least, to develop flexibility. Married people and community people can reject the opportunity and choose to become rigid, but they are challenged to do otherwise, their life arrangements are usually much easier to endure as they develop flexibility. Single people often have to look around for opportunities for openness. When they are severed in some way from their families and not utilized in church structure, they gravitate more toward their work or their play and find all the media hype about swinging singles to be so much self-fulfilling prophecy. Religious people are supposed to be open to God, willing to allow some room for mystery and the workings of providence. Whether one is married, single, widowed, religious, gay, straight, whatever, the need for flexibility and openness (whether to God, others, one's own growth) is a need. To assume that singles do not need or want openness and to deny them its possibility is to misperceive the situation.

2. *Intimacy*. It has been established in a number of ways that people need a stable community of intimacy in which to work out and enjoy life. All people have issues or problems to confront in themselves but none can do it by themselves. The single person often has some trouble in establishing a community and in fitting into family or religious community contexts—when they get close to a family the assumption is that what they really want is to get married; when they find some solace with members of a religious community, they are often asked why they don't just join up. They do not want to get married or join up, but to remain single. They need, however, as everyone does, a context of intimacy. A friend of mind says that everyone needs someone to say, "Don't be a fool, darling." The someone has to be critical enough to say, "don't be a fool" and loving enough to say, "darling." Singles are no exception.

Many people persist in seeing single people as loose and unanchored. That is not true, but it is true that in a highly mobile society the friendships single people make are often scattered over a wide geographical territory and the needs for a community of intimacy have to get worked out differently. The stable community of intimacy, whether that is provided by a family, a religious group or some kind of intentional community of politics, provides people with a way to live with others. Single people need to be encouraged to participate in

communities of intimacy, not just work or play groups.

3. *Others*. In marriage and in religious communities there appear to be built-in opportunities for having to take significant others seriously. When people must worship together, eat together, live in some kind of peace and charity together, they are drawn away from egocentricity. Single people can get off center (eccentric) easily and it is important for them to have ways to focus on people and needs beyond their own. The notion that people need to sense something larger, more perfect, enticing, powerful, etc., is as old as the Greeks and as varied as the poets, yet the culture often assumes that single people only need or want themselves. The Bible and religious tradition insist that the fundamental mistake anyone can make is to assume, wrongheadedly, a position of centrality, to place the self in the center of the universe. Perhaps marriage is enjoined in the Bible precisely because placing one's ego at the center of the universe is an overwhelming temptation when people are alone.

4. *Death*. From Heidegger to Woody Allen we are told that death is important and that facing it gives dimension to our lives. With families and communities there is an opportunity (in experience and intimacy) to come to terms with death. Single people often have trouble finding someone with whom to talk about death, and they surely find it difficult to have someone with whom they can have some experience of it. Death is private; we do not call in single friends at the time of death but tend to exclude almost everyone. At the other end of the spectrum, what can one do when a single person dies? Who is called, especially if their parents are dead already? How do people find people to be serious about their death? Churches can help in this area—perhaps by enlisting single people to help visiting the sick and helping them to find some discussions and experience about death and dying in more than a clinical situation—but they often do not.

The development of character is surely not guaranteed in marriage or in a religious community, but the opportunities for flexibility, intimacy, meeting the demands of others and experiencing death are there, built into the structure. Any married or community person can choose to ignore the opportunities, choose to be rigid, closed to intimacy, totally egocentric and alone, even at the moment of death. My point is that family and community recognize these needs as needs of the married and religious person rather than as needs for all persons; they provide ways for their members to get these needs met. Single people have the same needs and no built-in institutions to help them; further, they get little help from the institutions already available.

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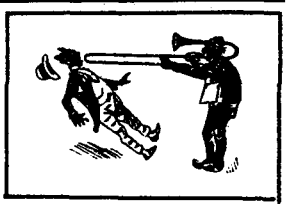
SINGLENESS is here to stay; many people are and will continue to be single and it will take on an increasingly positive character. At this point the positive value is coming predominately from the marketplace—the one place where singles are valued and welcome. If the churches and the family do not offer some good alternatives to single people, then singles will get caught up in the false communities of capitalist investors.

Single people have time and as such are a great natural resource. Singleness should be given a positive reading and some theoretical support in and by the churches. In Christianity one can choose to be celibate "for the kingdom," but what about those who do not want to be described in such highly religious rhetoric? How can single people function to mitigate against some of the problems in society, especially problems in the family and in churches and get their own needs met at the same time? One way is for the churches (in their various structural arrangements, community and family) to see the positive value of singles and to understand their needs.

Singleness cannot be perceived as a pity, but must be seen as a valuable way for people to choose to live. Single people have time for service that married and community people simply do not. Single people challenge the view that marriage and family are normative. Because of the mobility of many single people they often develop a kind of psychological gregariousness that extends itself in new kinds of friendships. The assumptions of religion and the family have often been negative when it comes to singleness. In these days when religion and the family both appear to be in some difficulty themselves, it might be a good time to take another look at the singles—at their power as well as their needs, at their value as well as their demands.

THE RADIO POWER PLAY



Testing our ear drums—and our civility

WALTER DONWAY

THE YOUNG Englishman tending the Radio Shack store on York Avenue at 85th Street tapped the glass of the counter front. "See this one?" he said. "It's designed all wrong for the American market. It doesn't *look* powerful.

"That radio's got three-and-a-half-inch speakers—big, for a portable. But the kids won't buy, because the design doesn't *reflect* the power. In London, you don't have to, but here—yes."

I left without buying a radio. I hadn't really come to buy one. But I do buy the analysis. It *is* a question of power, I'm afraid; and, by implication, it's a question for all of us—a question of civility.

Today, in any public area of New York City (and in other major cities, I suspect)—on buses and subway trains, in movie theater ticket lines, or just walking along—you must expect the sudden, rising howl and static thudding of an approaching twenty-pound, $99.95, 3½-inch-chrome stereo radio (or tape deck, or special combination).

Sit in Central Park at lunch time. You can hear it coming, far away down some leafy path: murmuring canned voices, a jangling, a thumping. Watch people at such times, especially the older people who spend much of their day in the park during the warm weather. Their faces stiffen; they look, then glance away, afraid. When a really *big* radio passes on a bicycle rack, playing at top volume, it seems to tear a long slash in the tranquil atmosphere.

At such times, I confess, I hear another sound. It is the rending of our civility, of the fabric of our lives together in this city. Isn't there something brazen about the radio toters, a deliberate testing of their power to impose openly on the rest of us? Isn't it a kind of power play?

That is what I began to suspect, one evening a few months ago, when American Airlines delayed its 8:55 flight from Kennedy International Airport to Rochester, New York, for nearly three hours, while mechanics repaired the pilot's microphone. In the flight lounge, the passengers—many of them returning from vacations at Disney World in Orlando, Florida—chatted quietly, yawned, read, and scratched their peeling sunburns. Some of the children slept on the floor, wrapped in blankets; some padded about the lounge, carrying quivering rubber alligators. Later, an airline employee pushed in a big cart piled with trays of Danish pastry, coffee and tea, soda and ice. Passengers queued up, served themselves, munched quietly.

Then, like the screech and crush of an intersection automobile smashup, *music*—a raucous wheezing and thumping—blared in a far corner of the lounge. Children woke, people muttered and craned their necks to look.

Two young men about college age—big, blond, in T-shirts that showed off imposing biceps—crouched over a huge radio,

WALTER DONWAY *is Executive Associate of The Commonwealth Fund and a regular contributor to* Private Practice, *a journal of the Congress of County Medical Societies.*

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apparently oblivious to all but the music. As I watched them, however, I noticed that they did glance around slyly observing the other passengers. No one else did anything, so I complained to the attendant at the ticket counter. He responded, and the radio fell silent.

About an hour later, passengers filed into the plane, ready at last. As it waited its turn to take off, lights dimmed inside, passengers dozed; the flight attendants whispered requests for drink orders.

Suddenly, from near the back of the plane, came radio music: hoarse, static-filled because of bad reception inside the plane, but above all, *loud*. Passengers woke, craned their necks, murmured angrily to one another. This time, I complained immediately and loudly. The flight attendant hurried to the rear of the plane; the radio again fell silent, and stayed silent, for the rest of the trip.

MY CONCERN, here, is not the teenage obsession with radios and nonstop, raucous music. That is a problem for parents—and I don't see what leg some parents will stand on, when they themselves spend four hours in front of the television set every evening. And don't our supermarkets, department stores, and restaurants all feature nonstop, piped-in music, as though our species breathed it? Nor is it the Central Park radio toters, I'd guess, who flock to Studio 54 and numberless other discotheques.

My concern is not the people for whom the heavy beat is a high, or a sedative, a way not of confronting others but of dropping out. They have been with us for decades—people who can't bear a moment alone without their radio or television. Except at World Series time, however, when those odd guys walked around with tiny radios pressed to their ears, none of this went public. It remained . . . well, *private* vice.

Today, it has become an issue of civility, for "civil" in the sense I mean implies merely a refraining from rudeness. Its literal origin is "to citify"—to encourage behavior that makes it possible for us to live together in close quarters. Civility is social virtue, a virtue made of necessity.

I know there has been talk of a multiplicity of cultures in America, and even of an "imperialism" of middle class, standard American culture over Afro-American, Hispanic-American, American-Indian, American-youth, and American-counter cultures. And it's true that many radio toters are young Blacks or Hispanics; no one can but notice that. But I urge that, in this instance, we stand up for "culture" in the basic sense. A culture exists only when people find a way to live together, to cooperate, and all cooperation is by rules. Among the most basic is that shared facilities must be for activities *all* users may pursue. In a movie theater, everyone can sit quietly and watch the film; but what happens if everyone stands up to get a better view of the screen? On a bus, everyone can read, chat quietly, or watch the sidewalk show; but what happens if everyone plays his portable radio with the three-and-a-half-inch speakers?

Of course, the "power" of the radio toters—the futile power to offend, impose, frustrate, even frighten—must arise from feelings of actual powerlessness. And it is from blocked lives, strangled energy, that violence—the ultimate incivility—comes.

But just as frustration, rage, can be part of the explanation of crime, without excusing it, we may acknowledge the causes of uncivility without excusing or tolerating it. There is too much variety in the race, age, apparent education, and signs of economic well-being among the radio toters to trace the syndrome to any but essentially individual motives. Here, as elsewhere, what used to be called "social determinism" seems to break down.

BY ANY REASONABLE standard of culture and civility, the radio toters are wrong. We have a right to demand that they desist. Recently, a "no radios" sign has joined the usual "no smoking" sign in some buses; and some parks are now posted against radio playing. But the bus drivers don't enforce the rules; and in parks, usually, there is no one to enforce them, either.

What shall we *do*, then, when just bumping someone's elbow in the subway can be fatal? That is at the heart of the power play, the real squeeze people feel: the general level of fear is so high that most of us have decided to sit in the subway, the bus, the park, and just *take* it.

I, for one, will not. I have spoken whenever it seemed reasonably prudent, and will speak again. But that is a personal declaration. I will ask for civility, because I feel miserable when I do not ask. The risks are real, though—especially where the element of racial confrontation may potentially be present—and risk-taking is a matter of personal values.

I have to say, though, that I suspect that fear of physical confrontation is often a rationalization. I have watched as many people hesitate to ask for civility from their own children as from the radio toters. The real uneasiness, I think, is fear of rebuff, of being sassed and made to feel demeaned and even more frustrated. Men, in particular, may fear that they will be challenged and (sensibly, of course) will have to back off and so feel humiliated as a man.

It's odd, but not an accident, perhaps, that I have seen only women protest to the radio toters. A lovely lady standing in a bus during the after-work crush asked a teen-ager, in no uncertain terms, please to turn off his monster radio. The young man turned to me and, with a choke of actual embarrassment, asked (shouting, of course) if his radio bothered *me*. Yes, I shouted back, it did. He turned it off.

The problem may be as broad as the mood of our culture and our city—a mood that seems akin to appeasement, a pervasive uncertainty about what we may properly demand. The uncivility of the radio toters is but one symptom; they sense our backing away, and they push forward.

You may choose to speak out directly, as I shall, or perhaps speak in other contexts, other ways, for civility as such. It is a bother to speak up, of course; somehow it often seems easier to "take it." But until civility has vanished, we will not know how important it was. And when it is gone, we may wonder at how little once stopped us from defending it.

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RUINED LIVES & WASTED TALENTS

The permanent refugees

JAMES I. WASSERSTROM

ALTHOUGH THE recent war between Tanzania and Uganda ended to the smug satisfaction of most black African states, it has been reported that cascades of refugees have been let loose into adjacent countries. Estimates are made of the total "cost" of the conflict to President Julius K. Nyerere's Tanzania, completely ignoring the "price" to be paid by those nations, by this unfortunate region forced to cope with invasions of these unarmed and uprooted peoples.

Refugees represent three recognizable "costs" to the countries of central Africa. Most burdensome of these is the long-term social cost, in most cases the commitment of resources to support refugees for an indefinite period where these resources are fewest and most precious. This category also includes the incalculable price of ruined lives and wasted talents.

Second in importance is the "threat cost," that is, the large amounts spent on military preparedness by home countries in order to repulse guerrilla movements composed of exiles. The object lesson of the Tanzania-Uganda war, where Uganda ex-President Milton Obote and other Ugandan exiles were an important consideration in Mwalimu Nyerere's decision to make war, is not lost on other African leaders tenuously holding onto the reins of power.

Last, a political price is exacted from world, or in this case, American opinion. That the credibility and legitimacy of African rulers can be questioned is only underscored by the continuing flow tide of refugees, a tide that is still coming in. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has estimated that the five countries of Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire have now created or now support approximately three million refugees.

The clearest illustration of these costs is provided in vitro by the tiny countries of Rwanda and Burundi, microcosm of their much larger neighbors. But in order fully to appreciate the utility of these two instances, it is necessary for us to quickly recall certain fundamental facts of modern history in Africa. During hundreds of years before Europeans arrived, ethnic groups competed for grazing and hunting rights, and for arable land. Losers in these struggles, "refugees" as we now call them, have therefore constituted a permanent feature of life in Africa, as any number of groups, particularly the Fulani in the West, the Masai in the East—forced from their traditional homelands centuries ago, wandering ever since—can bear witness. The Tutsi of Rwanda and Burundi, victims of the same process, departed one region of the Nile years ago, eventually to become the overlords of another group, the Hutu, already established there. The Hutu themselves may well have been the victors in a similar conflict against resident pygmies, long since decimated and now nearly vanished.

Unfortunately, Europeans exerted no positive influence on the patterns of culture and history. Indeed, it has been persuasively argued that Europeans have themselves exacerbated these problems. It is of course true that expatriation is now the more brutal because of modern weaponry and technology in general. In Rwanda and Burundi, therefore, (as in Malawi and Nigeria during the recent past, or currently in Chad, Uganda, Zaire, or Zimbabwe-Rhodesia), vast number of refugees are victims of African culture and history intensified by European colonial and post-colonial policy.

In these two countries, of like ethnic character, the Tutsi represent 15-20 percent of the population, while the Hutu form virtually all of the remainder. In Burundi, the Tutsi hold almost all the Cabinet positions in the military government of Colonel Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, while in Rwanda the government of Major-General Juvénal Habyarimana is controlled by Hutus.

The last twenty years in both countries have been characterized by periodic bloody convulsions as a result of intra- and inter-ethnic fratricide, and occasional invasions by repressed or renegade political movements. In Rwanda in the late 1950s and again in the '60s, Hutus rose up against their traditional Tutsi masters, and took control of the infant government. As a result, approximately 100,000 Tutsis fled to neighboring nations; about half went to Burundi. The Rwandese government now encourages these refugees to return. It claims to have consolidated its power and educated its citizenry to exercise maximum restraint; that is, a genteel discrimination by the Hutu against the Tutsi. As late as last fall, however, a steady trickle of Tutsis came into Burundi as the Rwandese government talked of introducing a system of identity cards. These newest refugees said they feared their local version of Kristallnacht; they felt increasingly unwelcome in their own country, not withstanding the reported relaxation of strictures against them.

JAMES I. WASSERSTROM *has served as a Diplomatic Intern with the State Department at the U.S. Embassy in Bujumbura, Burundi.*

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In Burundi, tension between the two groups remains very high, and government holds power, literally, by a process of elimination. Genocide of large numbers of Hutus (estimated variously at 50-300,000) occurred during three weeks in May 1972. These figures translate into the unbelievably high murder rate of somewhere between 100-600 people every hour, every day. Burundi officialdom publicly blames these so-called "events" ("les évènements") on exiled inheritors of Patrice Lumumba who allegedly incited the ordinarily docile Hutu to rebellion in order to establish a base for themselves from which to attack the Mobutu regime in neighboring Zaire. Whatever the cause, the Hutus lost miserably; approximately 150,000 poured across the nominal border into northwestern Tanzania; another 20,000 managed to make it into Rwanda and Zaire. These 170,000 people have remained more or less in the same places ever since.

As receiving countries, Burundi and Rwanda will have to act as host indefinitely. But by all traditional measures, these are destitute nations; like Bangladesh they can in no way afford to allow displaced persons to assimilate, to further tax limited resources such as food, jobs, or almost non-existent public welfare and educational structures. At the same time, refugees become a dangerous source of frustration and malcontentment.

THE DESPERATE SITUATION of the refugees is revealed in the countryside. In Burundi, land available to refugees is infertile. Malnutrition is pervasive. Famine during certain seasons is common as the more prosperous Burundi farmers sell their main cash crop, coffee, for high prices, and spend their increased income on staples and other foodstuffs. The prices of these goods rise accordingly, often exceeding the reach of the poor refugee farmers. Medical services, such as doctors, drugs, or simple information about preventive medicine, are often left to irregularly supplied and inadequate missionary dispensaries or occasionally to primitive hospitals. Only those who are well enough to walk the long miles over exhausting, rolling hills can afford to wait up to three days in line for an examination by a nurse. Obviously, such stopgap measures fail in the face of a highly contagious disease like cholera, which will flare up and engulf an already weak, malnourished community in a matter of days or weeks.

In Bujumbura, Burundi's capital, Rwandese refugees swell the phalanxes of the urban under- and unemployed, thereby increasing already surplus capacity in labor and keeping wages intolerably low. Refugee families survive as much on donations from organizations like the Catholic Relief Services as on their own meager salaries. It is very difficult to question the value of food aid in countries which must carry the burden of large-scale population dislocation.

Male children grow up quickly. By the age of eight, many have become middlemen in the sale of foodstuffs or curios; later in order to pay the bride-price, some become smugglers, a pattern supporting the trend towards an absent or deceased father. Refugee girls, some as young as thirteen-years-old, are known to form the bulk of the prostitutes in Bujumbura. Screened from educational advancement by a discriminatory scoring system on the national exam, excluded from the economic mainstream by poor land, hindered in their ability to amass capital in a capitalist society, terrified of involuntary repatriation or deportation, the present generation of refugee youth is no less in limbo than their elders: two decades of this state is creating an eerie listlessness, a profound anomie.

Sensing that a similar frustration must be felt by the 150,000 Hutu refugees in Tanzania, the Burundi Tutsi government is terrified by the threat of an invasion of these exiles and the thought of an alliance between the Hutu living within the country and those outside. Among diplomats in Bujumbura, it was rumored that some of these Hutu are receiving guerrilla training by presumably experienced professionals. This possibility has not gone unnoticed by the Burundi military, which absorbs at least one-fifth of the government budget. Given the country's stark poverty, this proportion becomes especially telling and depressing.

Naturalization as citizens of Burundi, Rwanda, or Zaire is not an available choice: the refugees are not wanted. In addition, many refugees view offers of citizenship cynically, and rightly so.

In Zaire, for example, during the early 1970's the naturalization of many Rwandese refugees had taken place. Many of these Tutsi were highly educated and rose to positions of prominence in the government, particularly in the administration of eastern Zaire's Kivu province. Although aware of the notorious caprice and corruption of the Mobutu regime, the offer of citizenship was one that many could not afford to refuse. During mid-1978, these new citizens were stripped of their Zairois nationality by an edict that must have been approved, if not initiated by the highest level of government. In this way, not only were traditional ethnic rivalries assuaged but new opportunities for increased graft were created overnight. The decree was eventually modified slightly, but Rwandese and other refugee minorities became stateless persons. Cruel lessons like this one need hardly be taught twice.

The only secular organization that appears to operate somewhat effectively within these abject states is the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. It attempts to keep accurate accounts of refugee movements, and with the cooperation of host governments, it provides subsidies for housing, education and medical treatment. It also acts in an advisory capacity in the supervision of the camps or zones in which many refugees are settled.

In central Africa, these services cannot always be performed. The overworked UNHCR representative in Burundi has had five staff members with responsibility for 50,000 or more official refugees. One can only imagine the situation in adjacent Tanzania with 150,000 refugees located in a province practically unreachable by overland transport, 800 miles from the small UNHCR office in Dar-es-Salaam.

The hazard of supporting a privileged international bureaucratic class becomes apparent when a war like the Tanzania-Uganda conflict erupts. In a crisis, the additional UNHCR support personnel in regional capitals do not relish the thought

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of leaving the comforts of Nairobi, or even Addis Ababa, to become involved in the vast amounts of nettlesome red tape and unimaginably unpleasant details which large-scale population movements involve. How does one determine a refugee according to the tortuous conventions and regulations required to implement this international welfare scheme? Who is merely taking advantage of the confusion to establish a new identity for purely economic profit? The problems are as serious as those that bog down our own welfare bureaucracies.

Despite bureaucratic resistance, in most cases the UNHCR is successful in discharging its responsibility to support the refugees under its aegis. As a result, most African states can afford to remain partly anesthetized, not feeling the full effects of these amputations of their own bodies politic. But there are other profound effects, if only subliminal ones, on the African and Western consciousness.

African nations complain that the United States does not take them seriously. And it is true, we do meddle; we have paid for innumerable political births, marriages, divorces and deaths with our aid. But Americans, rightly or wrongly, are now reacting cynically, at least in part due to African policies of thanklessness and abuse. Indisputably the industrialized countries, and mainly the U.S., are presently supporting, directly or indirectly, nearly three million people in central Africa, many of them widows and children. Now that President Nyerere with the tacit approval of his colleagues in the Organization of African Unity, has eliminated the power of a man widely regarded within the black African community as essentially evil, perhaps it is time for the OAU to face another one of its omnipresent and widespread griefs, the malignancy of the refugee problem.

Dance

THE BOLSHOI CONTINUES

DANCING SKILL & CHOREOGRAPHIC PAP

WITH THE UTTER conviction that broad heroic gesture is still the most appropriate movement for dancers, the Bolshoi continues to present melodramatic ballets with technical eloquence. The gap between the highly sophisticated presentational skills and the choreographic pap is vast. Soviet pedagogy regularly produces dancers of special grace and Soviet political concerns just as regularly strangle creative choreographic expression. (On this recently completed tour, politics prompted three requests for asylum in the United States, the first ever by Bolshoi dancers, who enjoy more privileges than most in this normally privileged class, who are exempt from military service, among other things.)

Audiences are inevitably forced to choose between looking at the design of the ballets the dancers are given to perform or the manner in which they dance them. The latter is consistently more interesting than the former. The most significant part of the Bolshoi visit was the demonstration that the company has an entire new generation of dancers capable of taking over from the principals who have dominated the company for the past fifteen years. This trip was made without Maya Plisetskaya, Vladimir Vasiliev, Ekaterina Maximova, Maris Liepa, Nina Sorokina, Mikhail Lavrovsky, Yuri Vladimirov and Shamil Yagudin, to mention only the top people; and yet the company presented five full evening ballets with great panache and artistry.

The core of the new generation consists of Ludmila Semenyaka, Nadezhda Pavlova (no relation to Anna), Vyacheslav Gordeyev and, until he left, Alexander Godunov. Of the senior artists, Natalia Bessmertnova looked as lyrically assured as she has in the past and Nina Timofayeva, nearing retirement age at present, is still a compelling presence despite some fussy mannerisms such as dropping out of character when not center stage. No one but Timofayeva could get away with it for a moment, but it has become part of her persona and therefore accepted along with the artistry.

Pavlova and Semenyaka are both extraordinary examples of Soviet training and, in particular, that of Leningrad's Kirov, the successor of the czarist Maryinsky school. Pavlova received her schooling in Perm, a Siberian city to which the Kirov company and school were removed during World War II. This influence was prominent in the school left behind them when they returned to Leningrad in 1944. Semenyaka is a total

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product of the Kirov academy and had been a member of the company before transfer to Moscow.

They are both stunning dancers with a glittering future before them. Neither has as yet adopted the furious, energetic approach of the Bolshoi, but both rely on a chaste, singing line that only occasionally makes some bow to the dramatic acting so much a part and parcel of the Bolshoi. There is a slightly dark shading to Semenyaka's dancing as if she were perpetually living with some hidden sadness that was allowed to peek out to a slight degree. She has particularly eloquent arms and brings a range of expressiveness to her gestures that is special even by Russian standards. Far more than any other nation Russia stresses a "speaking" quality to arm movement that Semenyaka uses to express anguish and dismay most poignantly.

Pavlova's special quality is most easily identified in the effortless flow of her danced steps. Almost without willed effort she will suddenly be propelled by her quicksilver legs into the most complex combinations and emerge serenely and confidently. Her legs almost have an interlocking relationship, so that rapidly traveling steps have a slight flickering look unlike the broader more defined steps that one ordinarily anticipates. The accent imparted to the movement suggests that it is, in some manner, removed from ordinary articulation. Where others walk she glides and shimmers.

Gordeyev is her partner and husband; together they form one of the most popular stage couples in the Soviet Union. He is a classical dancer with the reserved temperament that one would associate more with the crystaline Kirov style and yet he is a total product of the Bolshoi school and has never danced with any other major company. This patrician air, in some way, cut down on his effectiveness as the rough-mannered slave hero of 'Spartacus." He simple didn't look the type in the way that the less polished Godunov did. The latter charged through the ballet with the impetus of an angry locomotive. It is an approach that does not rely on subtle character shading but strikes for the blunt, uncomplicated gesture that will be understood in the furthest reaches of the house. In attack one wields an épée and the other a saber.

"Spartacus" was but one of the five ballets that the company presented in New York. All were by the company's artistic director Yuri Grigorovich. All were full evening in length and all of them were examples of Grigorovich's determination to eliminate mime from the stage and replace it with pure dancing. In this he is in total agreement with George Balanchine, director of New York City Ballet, but Balanchine is one of the supreme geniuses in the history of ballet and Grigorovich is one of its hewers and drawers.

His vocabulary of movement is small and his conception of stage space is that of a first-year art student who has been told about the figure and ground distinction and who ponderously adheres to the division in the most correct and stultifying way. In almost all the ballets there are groupings upstage in some manner commenting on the personages downstage—their postures are a base for these principal dancers. However, it is not so much a counterpoint or any kind of a dynamic interchange but a decorative background. There is also a rigid symmetry running through the ballets which is not so much a classical balance as it is the hobgoblin of a rather limited creative intelligence. The antagonistic relationship between Romeo and Tybalt in "Romeo and Juliet" is expressed with almost the same arched back leaps as characterized the adversary role of Crassus in "Spartacus." "The Stone Flower" is a ballet from the '50s in which Grigorovich first demonstrated some of his theories about danced movement as opposed to mime and presumably brought himself to the attention of the powers that be. "The Legend of Love," a turgid bit of Orientalia, appeared in 1961 and confirmed their good opinion of him. He was made artistic director of the Bolshoi in 1967, the fifieth anniversary of the revolution.

Blasphemy is the first word that comes to mind as an adequate description of his recreation of the Petipa/Ivanov masterpiece "Swan Lake." One could even live with the rosy dawn happy ending were it not that every creative impulse was directed toward dragging this gossamer fairy tale into cartoon brashness. Mr. Grigorovich has certainly laid his stamp on the image of the Bolshoi in these past twelve years and has much to answer for, though apparently not to the political watchdogs who keep him in power.

DON McDONAGH

Screen

BELIEF AS BANANA PEEL

AND KRAMER STUMBLES

CONSIDER HOW many things are being sent up at once in a typical moment from *Monty Python's Life of Brian*. Brian (Graham Chapman) has been sent out by the People's Front of Judea to graffiti "Romans Go Home" in the market place, but a burly centurion catches him at it. Nabbing Brian by the ear, the centurion impatiently corrects his Latin—a noun of direct address should be in the nominative plural, "Romani"; verb in the imperative; "Domus" in the accusative, indicating motion toward, "Dom*um*"—and then makes him copy the slogan over 100 times on the walls. Simultaneously getting the zinger here are radical splinter groups, traditional British schooling, dumb cops and, vaguely, the New Testament. The New Testament is really the least of the targets, though. It's little more than the banana peel on which the other objects of this satire are taking their pratfall.

The same is true even in scenes where Holy Scripture is being parodied directly, as when Brian, in another brush with the centurions, hides among some street-corner preachers. To blend in, he begins ranting himself, saying whatever comes into his head about the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. To his dismay, his sermon starts a commotion that draws attention to him. "'Ere now, what's gown' on?" asks a pass-

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ing centurion. "'Iss bloke," explains a bothered listener, "is sayin' 'ow the *buhrds* ain' gaw no *jawbs*." "Consider the lily," interjects Brian, trying to change the subject. "Now 'e's startin' in on a bloody flowuhrs!" the listener, who's getting hot under the collar, complains to the centurion. Even here the real pasting is being taken by the British working class, not the Bible. It's only the literal-minded dolts of the world that Eric Idle and the rest of the Monty Python lunatics can't stand. Being literal-minded, such people never laugh at Monty Python's jokes.

Aside from sticking it to the British masses, Monty Python has no consistent gag. The inconsistency is what keeps the group going, in fact. If you don't like the joke, wait a few minutes. It's like the weather in Chicago. These chaps are gadflies, flitting about fecklessly from subject to subject and having their bit of fun with each. It is therefore hard to make the charge of sacrilege, which the church has leveled against the film, stick. How can you condemn a point of view where none exists? The film does appropriate the life of Christ for its own, secular purposes, but it has no ideas about that life which are coherent enough to be objectionable.

It is the laws of man rather than God to which the group seems to fear it might be answerable. Libel law in England is very strict. The standard gambit when you're basing a fictional character on someone real who might feel defamed is to introduce that person into the drama under his own name in another, more neutral role. Then you can claim that the injured party has no grounds to believe that the slanderous role is intended to caricature him as well. *Life of Brian* does this by representing Brian as a second infant who was born in a manger the same night as Christ. When the Wise Men discover their mistake in paying adoration to Brian, they reclaim their gifts and go off down the street in a huff to find the right stable. Thus has Monty Python insured that God won't be able to haul them before the Queen's Bench and sue.

Otherwise, Monty Python hasn't really given much thought to God. In a general sort of way, I suppose, Brian is a reluctant Jesus. But his story is too garbled for us to be able to tell for sure. After quibbling with what he says on the street corner, everyone follows him anyway. It's completely arbitrary. The only certain interpretation possible is that it happens in order to open the way for more gags. When they have chased Brian up a mountain, his unwanted disciples begin moaning that he's led them into a wilderness where there's nothing to eat. Hostilely he looks around and points out a juniper bush with berries on it. Having originally stayed only to dispute him, the crowd now falls at his feet shouting, "A miracle! A miracle!" Monty is sticking it to the crowd here rather than to Brian. Brian is only the foil in this skit.

If something Brian says or does one minute should give offense, the next minute it might as easily be taken as sympathetic to religion. When the crowd at first shows such typical working-class disrespect for Brian, does not the parable in this imply that the multitude today wouldn't recognize Christ if they saw him? I'm unclear what specific objections the church has to this movie, but what really rankles is that it treats the life of Christ with indifference. His life is used as an expedient here, a story in the public domain which is therefore convenient as a hook to hang the satire on. The lack of malice is worse than the malice itself would have been because the movie, as it is, is funny. Malice would have been a bore.

AN INDIFFERENCE to religion is also the insulting thing about Stanley Kramer's *The Runner Stumbles*. Unlike Monty Python, though, Kramer is a hypocrite about it. He pretends that he takes people who believe in God seriously. The film, adapted by Milan Stitt from his own Broadway play, begins in a cell where a Catholic priest named Rivard (Dick Van Dyke) has been locked up for the murder of a nun, Sister Rita (Kathleen Quinlan). The events leading to Rivard's arrest are then filled in through flashbacks that are the main plot of the film. This device is designed to exploit the shock value of the story rather than tell it well. It is in fact an inept way to tell it. Beginning with the accusation of the priest is like snapping open a capsule of smelling salts right under our noses. It's intended to make us light-headed so we won't be knocked senseless by the banality of the rest of the plot. To begin by raising the question of whether a priest could have committed a murder is only a good idea if that's the question your story answers. If not, it's cheating. It's a cheap trick to get our attention. In *The Runner Stumbles* it turns out in the second-to-last scene that the murder was committed by someone else whom we never suspected, whose motives remain obscure, and whose character, what little we've seen of it, seems no more capable of murder than the priest's.

Taken by themselves, the flashbacks are a love story, not a murder mystery. Again here Kramer has the extra dimension of its being a love story with a priest and nun. A priest killing a nun may still be a shocker, but a priest loving a nun is more of a teaser these days. Where making the former into a movie might take a certain courage, the latter only takes opportunism, which is why the script switches to it and abandons the murder angle as quickly as possible. A nun and priest in love have a currency that interests Kramer, the sort that's plunked down at the box office.

The love story that Kramer really wants to make is an old-fashioned one, *Brief Encounter* maybe. But nobody today can believe that middle-class propriety once kept people from hopping into bed, so Kramer needs more powerful restraints. He needs something that still has at least a bit of credibility to keep his lovers apart, to make their love manifest through denial. The trouble is that, like Monty Python, he's only using religion as an expedient. His real interests lie elsewhere. He and Mr. Stitt want us to believe in the power of religion in their characters' lives, but are either unwilling or unable to imagine how a religious vocation might be realized on the screen. (They should have taken a look at Robert Bresson's *Diary of a Country Priest*, made in 1953, the only great film about religious experience I have ever seen. Its austerity and the tiny audience to which its difficult beauties have limited its appeal over the years might have discouraged Kramer from even trying to mess with religion.) Father Rivard is supposed to be a

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glowering ascetic who needs cheering up, but Kramer leaves it to the gloomy weather in the film's Washington-State locations to convey Rivard's character. Dick Van Dyke, cast in the role because his TV fame makes him a box office draw even for people who don't ordinarily go to the movies, is completely inadequate to Rivard. As he bounces along on his priestly rounds in his flivver, we can't help remembering him fondly from *Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang*.

Sister Rita is of course supposed to be Rivard's cheerer-upper. Her performance is based on *The Flying Nun* and heavily influenced by Julie Andrews. When Kramer wants us to understand how much Father Rivard suffers over Sister Rita, he cuts to shots of the Stations of the Cross. When he wants us to see how attracted to her Rivard is, he shows us Rivard watching her run across the schoolyard with the children. She's so full of vim, vigor, spunk and sparkle that her pumping legs show flashes of white flesh above the black stockings. It's as if she were, underneath her habit, one of those little sex sprites whose cartoon figures used to decorate the pages of *Playboy*. When the sentimentalists like Kramer abuse religion even worse than nihilists like Monty Python, God is really beginning to get caught between the rock and the hard place.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

Books: EXEGETES & ALCHEMISTS

THE GENESIS OF SECRECY
On The Interpretation of Narrative
Frank Kermode
Harvard, $10, 169 pp.

Richard J. Dillon

MOST of the humanities will have their transitory mystiques, and, in case you have not been watching lately, literary criticism is currently in the business of mysticizing "Narrative" (majuscule mine). Narrative seems to be taking flight as a transcendental concept since it can hardly be circumscribed any longer by a single category of function or finality. Once a story is written, it eludes the designs and expectations of everybody connected with it: author, reader, and protagonist. An author, as we know, cannot remain in control of the valences of his speech, so it is otiose to make his original intention the first order of interpreters' business. The reader, on the other hand, is always prey to passions for order and sequence that make him pursue the "comfortable fictions" of "transparency, the single sense, the truth" in a story, instead of divining its various modes and possibilities of "Meaning" (majuscule mine again). And pity the poor protagonist, for various sources of "opacity" take him quickly out of sight in any interpretation, and "transparency on events" is absolutely the last thing one can expect from "Narrative."

One is tempted to view all this as the kind of vaporizing of the atmosphere by which academicians, like bureaucrats, protect their jobs from public scrutiny. Frank Kermode bids for a respectful hearing, however, by undertaking to illustrate these "disappointments" of the interpreter's trade in the narrative of Mark, earliest and briefest of the New Testament gospels, and the one to which Martin Dibelius gave that oxymoronic label, "the book of secret epiphanies." Right at the beginning, Kermode apologizes for being an "outsider" both to the skills of professional exegesis and—so we pick up by innuendo—to the ecclesiastical institution, which hovers over exegetical studies and indentures those who carry them on. His apology is scarcely sincere, of course, because he feels an outsider is always at full advantage as an interpreter, able to approach a text without the encumbrances of institutional consensus; able, too, to savor narrative as "Narrative" by "declining to situate (it) in historic time" and divining all the hidden conjunctions and oppositions that are at play in the text as it stands (pp. 136-137). "Divination," he says; others will say, alchemy!

It is already clear that Kermode subscribes to the current fashion of "structuralist" exegesis, which is committed to analysis of a text's immanent features and mostly disregards its historical setting and genesis. Be the merits of structuralism what they may, it is curious that its adherents come to be celebrated as the "outsiders," while practitioners of historical criticism are classified as torchbearers of an institution that nervously protects the historicity of the gospels and cares little for them as literature. Does Kermode know nothing of the modern warfare between leading exegetes and the churches? Does he misunderstand historical criticism as criticism concerned primarily with the "historical" basis of narratives ("what is written about")? Does he imagine that his votum in favor of the priority of "what is written" is emancipating when it comes fully seventy-five years after the work of exegetes Wrede Wellhausen, and twenty-five years after even the Belgian Benedictine, Jacques Dupont, presumed such priority as first principle of a resurrection-narrative study? How ironic it is that, whereas Martin Luther wrested the Bible from the institution's grip by rehabilitating its historical, literal sense, Kermode now stigmatizes the investigators of that sense as the same institution's mouthpieces! As Luther well knew, however, the alchemists will serve the institution better in the long run than the miners of the historical sense ever could.

In an appeal to Spinoza's hermeneutic that is either careless or high-handed, Kermode finds the philosopher's distinction between truth and meaning to be the license of interpretative "divinations" over and beyond a sacred author's intentions (pp. 119, 129f.). If one bothers to go to chapter VII of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, however, one dis-

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covers, lo, Spinoza's argument has been neatly inverted! Whereas Spinoza located "meaning" in the author's intention, disclosed by his words and their total context, while "truth" was the validity of what he said under the sovereign judgment of reason, Kermode's "truth" is the moot issue of the author's intention, and his "meaning" is the blue yonder of patterns and associations that appear when interpretation really begins. Just the kind of ulterior perspective that Spinoza wishes to exclude from the research of intended "meaning" returns with a vengeance in Kermode's divinations.

Our author's apology for limited acquaintance with mainline exegesis should have been more sincere since his information seems to come mostly from conservative British and American works. Although he accepts the broad consensus of gospel criticism which holds the literary priority of Mark among the Synoptics, he is not influenced by the irreversible gains of form criticism, nor does he show any acquaintance with the discussions of Mark's "messianic secret" that have been led by the Germans. Mark's individual narrative units and fleeting lateral personages are all so many tricks of an author's trade, and to see any reflexes of preliterary tradition in them only discourages entrepreneurial hermeneutics and shows an exegete's naiveté about the virtualities of "Narrative." Complex evolutionary patterns in the four passion narratives derive mainly from the four evangelist-impresarios, not from a vigorous and highly ramified oral tradition. The evangelists are portrayed as "midrash" specialists—a shibboleth on the rampage!—each with a stylus in one hand, a biblical codex in the other (apparently already in economical "Gideon" format), playfully transferring narrative motifs from the Jewish books to the story of Jesus. It is phantasmagoric, this vision of so much literary creativity and caprice in a preliterary age, when reading and writing were privileges of the few, and in a Christendom which spent its early years looking for the end of the world. Of course, if one renounces all responsibility to the historical circumstances of a text's formation, any discomforts caused by such a vision can be left to the exegetes *de métier* in their musty cloisters.

Have you guessed? Kermode's style of interpretation is not mine. In my opinion, it forecloses the real meaning of Mark, and of any book called a "gospel," by bracketing the traditions of belief which formed these books and emphasizing the mystical senses and aesthetic pleasures to be found in their textual configurations. No live issue will ever be touched by such probings. No impolite suggestion will ever be made to the "outsider" that he might consider becoming an "insider"!

Unprocessed data, wooly thinking

RE-CREATING THE EXPERIENCE OF LIFE-CHANGE AND RELIGION

Virginia H. McDowell

Beacon Press, $9.95, 197 pp.

SEXUAL DIMENSIONS OF THE CELIBATE LIFE

William E. Kraft

Andrews and McMeel, $12.95, 215 pp.

Rosemary H. Balsam

IN THE PAST several years there have been more and more books in the psychological field stressing the fact that the crises of adolescence are in no way statically "resolved" when a person becomes an adult. To mention but a few, there are Gail Sheehy's *Passages* in the popular literature, Dr. Daniel Levinson's work on the decades of male development in the professional literature, the huge body of writing on motherhood and the renewed interest in fatherhood led by Drs. Munder Ross and Alan Gurwitt. Dr. Virginia McDowell's book is therefore in tune with the times, as it concerns people's description of their adult changes towards further maturation. Mr. Kraft's book concerns opportunities for adult psychological and spiritual development, focusing on the sexuality of the celibate.

Dr. McDowell's book is a painstaking work. In a psycho-social way she looks closely at the individual lives of nine people. She has an opening chapter on

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her own involvement with the Cursillo movement, where she became associated with these people. The Cursillo emerged via Europe to the U.S.A. in the 1960's as an effort of the Roman Catholic church to "convert the individual by providing a profound experience of both community and marginality." In the life stories here the impression is that each sought out the Cursillo as a peripheral aspect of wide sweeping re-assessments already begun in their relationships to authority, to their spouses, work etc., and also the church. To follow up from Dr. McDowell's introduction and suggestion that the Cursillo was central as a "setting for change," the individuals would have had to expand the accounts of their feeling experiences in the group to show the reader the place of the movement in their assessment of their various changes. This is virtually absent and therefore remains mysterious. The titles of her chapters rival "The Canterbury Tales," e.g. "The Radical Nun," "The Dissenting Pilgrim," and the description of what we are about to hear from them fills one with anticipation. She then transcribes long verbatim accounts from each. I admire her humanistic approach to the individual, and I share her wariness about the limitations of psychodynamic extrapolations and generalities. However, I think that her hermeneutic rationale for letting the text speak for itself in the interest of preserving the immediacy of experience fails, and becomes an excuse for disorganization and a lack of any attempt to integrate the data or provide bridges between her underlying theoretical ideas from Erickson, Perry and others, and the live material. The trouble about these direct transcripts also is that the people sound flat in spite of the interesting facts of their lives. The affect and liveliness of either a face-to-face encounter or a good description are lacking. Instead the reader is forced into an ordeal of endless facts, peppered with "I don't know . . . buts" or a bland meaningless psychological jargon, curiously common to most of them: "negative response," "my deep and honest response," "being a growing thing," "so-and-so was freeing," "not phony," "the goodness of a decision." One Chicano woman is different. She happens to be brilliantly, verbally talented. In spite of Dr. McDowell's defense that "there is no such thing as 'raw' data . . . that life history is construction," I feel that this work is still too close to virtually unprocessed data to warrant a book.

She herself has very interesting thoughts but they remain isolated from the central material. The writing therefore deteriorates into a vague celebration of unhappy people who in mid-life took steps towards actively determining the course of their own lives. By the end we know that they changed externally many facets of their lives, and we know that they became disenchanted with things as they were, but we are not much wiser about the inner impetus towards the changes.

William Kraft's book on the sexual dimensions of the celibate life could have been fascinating. It is an excellent idea and title. He wants to convey that celibates are in no way asexual, that there is a place for sexual abstinence within marriage and that constant sexual activity is no guarantee of flourishing mental health. Unfortunately his thinking is woolly, confused, and overlapping. He proceeds by loose association, tautology and the setting up of pseudo-profound opposites. Due to his inadequate grasp of the psychoanalytic concepts of defense mechanisms of the ego, he makes the common error of the pop psychologist in inferring that defenses are bad, and that by an act of will a person can avoid "repressions" that lead to unhealthy sexuality. From the first he attempts to widen the usual definition of celibacy to those who have no commitment to live with another human being. His absence of logic then shows immediately when he tries to talk about the "married celibate," a contradiction in his own terms. Mr. Kraft reaches a typical crisis of conundrum in the following sentence: "In a sense, celibates who want to get married should not get married until they are already married." At the moment, as in this example, Dr. Kraft's use of language throughout seems designed to obscure thought.

From the heart of the population

BLOOD OF SPAIN

Ronald Fraser

Pantheon Books, $15.95, 608 pp.

George Woodcock

Blood of Spain begins with epigraphs by Engels and Brecht, and the Engels quotation is especially apposite, opening with the remark that: "History proceeds in such a way that the final result always arises from conflicts between many individual wills, and every one of them is in turn made into what it is by a host of particular conditions of life." But if *Blood of Spain* has a real model in literature it lies in the realm of fiction rather than conventional history: it is *War and Peace*, in which the religious anarchist Leo Tolstoy decided to depart from the view of history as a parade of great men's deeds, and to consider it as a pattern of actions and interactions within the lives of many people, ordinary and extraordinary, living at the time of a decisive historical event, in Tolstoy's case the French invasion of Russia in 1812, culminating in Napoleon's disastrous retreat from Moscow.

Tolstoy achieved his marvelous historical effects partly by research into documents, and to a great extent by elaborating what he knew of the experience of his own and other Russian noble families at the time of the Napoleonic wars, which were half a century in the past when he was writing. The special ingredient he added, and which Ronald Fraser has denied himself, is that of inventive reconstruction.

Yet, in spite of the different methods which Fraser has used, there emanates from *Blood of Spain* something of the epic feeling that envelops *War and Peace*, something of the same pristine and Homeric actuality. Despite the bitter disillusionments it eventually brought, the Spanish Civil War was perhaps the last conflict in which both sides could

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Early every morning the Madrid militiamen, organized by parties, trade unions and local groups, left the capital and returned late in the evening from their day spent in the Guadarrama mountains. A fourteen-year-old boy in the working-class barrio of Lavapies had the daily scene engraved on his memory.

—In the morning there'd be shouts. 'Pablo! Pedro! Manolo!' and the men came out of their houses with their rifles in their hands. Under the other arms they had the lunches their wives had prepared. They set off for the sierra as though they were going on a Sunday outing, to shoot rabbits. Often they were accompanied by women, some of them political, but more often not. Whores, that particular type of Madrid prostitute of the time with enormous breasts and buttocks— How amazing it seemed, remembered Alvaro Delgado, when in the evening they all came back to spend the night at home. The next morning the scene was repeated . . .

—Blood of Spain

feel, in the beginning at least, that they were involved in a heroic confrontation. And it is perhaps Mr. Fraser's most notable achievement that in the mosaic of oral histories which forms the fabric of *Blood of Spain* he has not only given us an invaluable insight into the concrete texture of daily living in many parts of Spain during the civil war, but has also—with the very active collaboration of his informants—recaptured the spirit of that distant time (almost as far away to us as 1812 was to Tolstoy when he wrote *War and Peace*) with a freshness that survivors of the Thirties will find poignant and authentic in its revival not merely of the events but also of the very atmosphere of that time whose generosities of spirit balanced the betrayals that led Auden to dismiss it as "a low, dishonest decade."

The generosities and the betrayals—they were there in abundance during the appalling years of the Spanish Civil War, and the glacial decades of the Franco regime—when Spain stood detached from the past among the surviving participants with an extraordinary vividness. *Blood of Spain* is based on statements Ronald Fraser collected from such survivors during two years at the end of the Franco era (between June 1973 and May 1975.) Five percent of the statements were collected among refugees still living in France, but an astonishing 95 percent of them were recorded in Spain itself, and their frankness shows how far the dictatorship had loosened before the dictator himself departed from the scene.

At the same time of which they speak most of the men and women from all classes and both sides of the conflict whom Fraser interviewed were relatively young—many of them in their teens, but this has worked to the advantage of his purpose, since his informants were at an impressionable and perceptive age when they took part in the events they describe, and, with few exceptions, they saw those events from the heart of the population rather than from positions of authority. Many of the more famous participants in the Spanish civil war have already recorded their memories in formal memoirs; it is appropriate that the recollections of these mostly uncelebrated militiamen and workers and peasants and professionals should be recorded informally and put together into an oral history that becomes a kind of grassroots biography of the Spanish people during the most crucial era of their recent past.

To avoid the image of a formal history, Ronald Fraser gives *Blood of Spain* the subtitle "Episodes from the Spanish Civil War." In fact there is a good deal more continuity than this description suggests. Groups of recollections, united by Fraser's own narratives, cluster around localities, issues, aspects of the war and of economic and social life. The military history is sketched in lightly, and this is appropriate, since it has been well-documented elsewhere, and the same is true of political history, except in so far as this affected ordinary people in terms of economic policies or of conflicts and relationships between political groups at the popular level.

Man and Technology
Edward G. Ballard

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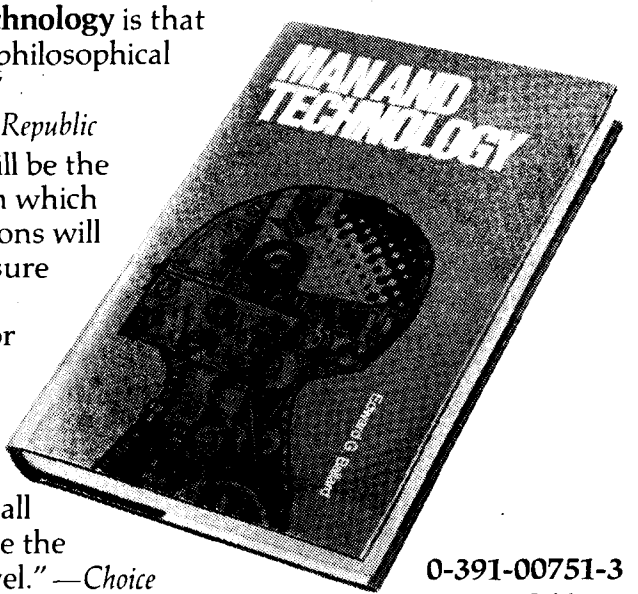

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The chronological form of the book tends to be loose, since it begins with an account of the actual military uprising of July, 1936, as it was seen and experienced by ordinary Spaniards in various regions, goes back to a panorama of the months of unrest that preceded the insurrection, and then clusters memories around the most significant factors in the civil war, including the geographical sectors, the social forces, the economic experiments, the conflicts behind the fronts. Even this degree of formal arrangement is broken by a series of brief interludes, eighteen of them called "Militancies" and giving brief histories of activist careers, and fifteen of them called "Episodes" and showing the kind of adventures and accidents of fate that happened to people during the Spanish civil war.

Among other features, *Blood of Spain* contains more elaborate information than most historians have usually given on the experiments in industrial and agrarian collectivization and co-operation in regions like Catalonia and Aragon where the anarcho-syndicalists were strong. It shows very strikingly how slight the popular support was for the military rising even in the more conservative regions (with the single exception of Carlist Navarre) as compared with the passionate mass support for the republic in cities like Madrid and Barcelona and in much of the southern and eastern countryside. And it presents a many-sided portrait of Franco which reveals the essential and virtually unrelieved coldness of spirit that made him so able a soldier, so cruel and methodical a represser, and so durable a tyrant; even the egregious Queipo de Llano, in the accounts of those who knew him, reveals more traces of humanity. There are a number of notable lacunae. For example, while we learn a great deal of life in Oviedo when it was besieged by the republicans, we are told almost nothing about what happened in the great anarchist stronghold of Saragossa after it was seized with surprisingly little resistance by the insurgents. And while there is a good account of the collapse of the Basque front, there is surprisingly little about the collapse of the Catalonian front. But at these points oral history doubtless suffers from the lack of survivors or the difficulty of finding them.

A documentary account of the Spanish Civil War seems particularly appropriate when one remembers the emphasis on the reportage as history which developed during the Thirties under the influence of left-populist fashions of thought, and *Blood of Spain* is a good example of the genre as it has been developed in our own day. It will be as useful to historians as it is fascinating to readers interested in the period, and we must be grateful that Mr. Fraser had the patience and good fortune to gather such a rich harvest of oral material so far away in time from the events. A decade ahead would have been too late for such a rich and many-sided compilation.

Personally, I finished *Blood of Spain* with the feeling that another book might now be written, about the extraordinary search which Mr. Fraser must have made to find such a wide range of informants, and about what has happened to these typical participants in the civil war during the forty years since 1939.

Come back, pastoral liturgy

THE STUDY OF LITURGY

Edited by Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, S.J.

Oxford, $19.95, 547 pps.

Robert W. Hovda

THIS IS a resourceful and useful work, the main purpose of which is to briefly sketch historical origins and developments in Christian liturgical practice in five major public worship areas: initiation, eucharist, ordination, divine office and calendar. Twenty-two authors of good repute present a vast amount of information about the texts of our rites, generally following this division of time: Jewish and New Testament, patristic, medieval, Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and contemporary.

It seems to me that the two ends of the chronological spectrum are the least satisfactory, considering the book as a whole (some sections are exceptions)—our Jewish roots, on the one hand, and contemporary developments, on the other. In between, the contributors are clearly experts. The writing is, for the most part, clear and lean. Extensive bibliographies prefacing every section and subsection make it more helpful to students than the dense compression of its ambitious scope would suggest.

An essay on the "theology of worship" precedes the historical sketches which comprise the bulk of the volume. Separate (but unequal) sections on the "Setting" (terrible word!) of liturgical action (subsections on ceremony, music, language, architecture, vesture), on "pastoral orientation," and indexes of subjects and of persons conclude the book. A format with divisions of this sort seems to me to perpetuate many of the problems that such a book should help to solve—a bit of "theology" at the beginning, and, at the end, a little sop to the "externals" and to "pastoral" concerns.

While considerations of movement, gesture, environment and the arts do receive a little bit of attention in at least some parts of the historical material, Hugh Wybrew unintentionally underscores a serious defect of the whole when he writes: "The rite, understood as a form of words. . . ." It is this sad fact, that our rites are still understood by most Christians as forms of words, that constitutes a major obstacle to the realization of the promise of our conciliar times, namely, of a dynamically experiential common prayer.

I do not mean to say that people like me, whose primary worship interest is not in the tracing of historical evolution and disintegration, ups and downs, but rather in the living worship of today and the mission it makes possible, cannot benefit from this book. I think we can. We need all the history that we can get, if only to correct our relentless current efforts to fulfill the prophecy that Jaroslav

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Pelikan delivered to a group of Roman Catholic priests during or shortly after the Second Vatican Council. He said then that we would make all the mistakes in the next decade or two that the 16th century Reformation had made in the last four centuries. It is the revenge of our frozen missal liturgy and our rationalistic catechetical formation that we are busily doing exactly that.

So we can learn much about the weakening and almost-loss of the sacramental dimension and the growth of didacticism in worship from Wainwright and others in this book. We can gain some understanding of the ways in which the clergy became so effectively separated and alienated from the rest of the church (Crichton, Hawkins and others). We can discover that many of the styles which we, true to the example of our 16th century forebears, fancy as "primitive" and "apostolic" and "scriptural" are in reality more closely related to periods of ritual decadence and corruption (Wainwright, Howell and others).

We can gain insight that will explain if not answer the question, "What ever happened to Christian initiation?" (Yarnold, Noakes, Fisher and others). We can see from the experience of many what a diminishment of the Gospel Eucharist and its paschal and covenant-ecclesial dimensions takes place whenever it is "rediscovered" as merely "a simple fellowship meal" (Jones, Noakes, Cobb and others). We can begin to understand what a profound conversion is (again) required if we are to appreciate sacraments as the actions of the assembly rather than as external objects dispensed by external ministers (Crichton, Hope and others). We can recover an appropriate respect for the ancient orders of specialized ministry when we relate and subordinate them to the basic ministerial deputation of baptism and to the faith community's constant need not only for hands to function in special ways but also for personal symbols to express and increase its solidarity (Hawkins, Crehan and others).

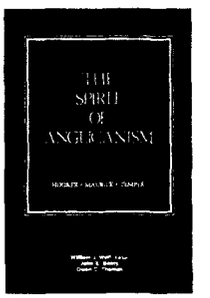
The book attempts to include liturgical developments in all of the Christian churches of the West, with just enough on those of the East to keep reminding us

> *The liturgy is the shared activity of a people gathered together. No other sign brings out this communal dimension so well as singing. Bodily movements can be synchronized but remain juxtaposed. Many individual voices, however, can actually be fused together, so that when they blend and follow the same rhythm, only one voice is heard—that of the group. This brings out a very strong feeling of unity and of belonging. It even touches on the essential mystery of the Church as* koinonia. *From the time of Ignatius of Antioch down to our own day, singing with one voice has remained a privileged way of expressing unity in diversity.*
>
> —J. Gelineau in *The Study of Liturgy*

that they are there and to be reckoned with. Thirteen of the authors are Anglicans, six are Roman Catholics, two are Methodists and one is Orthodox. Three editors are from the first three categories. Nevertheless it seems to me much too heavily British and a bit too heavily Anglican to serve its ambitious purpose. I have felt for a long time that the phrase "pastoral liturgy" is just as gratuitously tautological as the phrase "institutional church." Any community of faith is, as such, an institution. And any liturgy is, as such, pastoral. But this book has helped me see a real need for tautology. I mean no disrespect to the distinguished contributors and imply no lack of gratitude for the service the editors and publishers have performed when I say that I have a new respect for the phrase "pastoral liturgy" after plowing through nearly 600 pages (excepting J. Gelineau and patches of the others) of stiff upper lip and rational objectivity and cool distance.

I regret, therefore, that I cannot share the editors' hope that *The Study of Liturgy* become "an introduction to the study of liturgy for students in all of our churches throughout the English-speaking world." A help, yes. A reference work and dictionary and bibliography, yes. But not an introduction. Too much that is basic to and critical in an introduction is not here—at least not emphatically enough for me. There's too little here about the kind of people who do these things and the reasons why they do them—and if there is anything at all that an introduction to the study of liturgy has to have, it is that. D. H. Tripp's twenty-four theses on "Worship and the Pastoral Office" are timidly in the right direction (apart from the four "distinctions" under which they are organized and which again tend to reinforce our problems). But they should not have to be tacked on at the end. They should be the atmosphere and the spirit of the project.

The significance of ritual action as "playing reign of God" and offering thereby an alternative, or many alternatives, to the status quo gets a mention so subtle that you have to be looking for it consciously to find it. The extent to which that powerful meaning of Gospel



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celebration has been domesticated and corrupted to reflect the very society it is supposed to judge, the very society from which we are supposed to be momentarily liberated by ritual—is any question more important in the 20th century and where is it here? As a consequence, what about the sexist and racist and classicist language, structures, symbolization that are thereby obscenely sanctified instead of purged and discarded and transcended . . . "When I was a child. . . " How can we talk about initiation or eucharist or ordination in our time without clear and serious discussion of women's rights and responsibilities in the church? What does it mean for every single act of common prayer that we live in a new kind of world, Teilhard's world, where the dim hopes of the biblical message of human liberation and solidarity in God have suddenly become demands everywhere, where powerless and suffering people can suddenly be heard by and be present to us all? And where people who used to be the victims of destiny and fate are now able, technologically if not yet psychologically, to take all those once-unalterable military-economic-political institutions in hand?

My space is up, but the questions keep rolling on, and they are all relevant to liturgy. And I don't think we will have an introduction to the study of liturgy until we get a book that grapples with them. Meanwhile *The Study of Liturgy* will be a help.

When piety leads to disaster

THE GRAMMAR OF FAITH
Paul L. Holmer
Harper & Row, $10, 212 pp.

George H. Tavard

PROFESSOR of theology at Yale Divinity School, advertised on the book jacket as "a noted expert on the thought of Søren Kierkegaard and of Ludwig Wittgenstein," Paul Holmer raises high expectation among his prospective readers. *Grammar of Faith* is a tantalizing title. Many of us—I am not too sure about the latest graduates of high schools and colleges—have been exposed to the intricacies of grammar. We have some idea of what syntax is supposed to be and to do for your understandability when you speak, of the necessity of having mastered some semantics or vocabulary in order to formulate and communicate your ideas. When we land in a country whose language we speak, we expect its people to use the same grammatical rules or conventions. Among English speakers all over the world, grammar acts as a bond of fraternity and sorority which allows them to recognize one another as soon as they speak. For better or for worse it segregates them from all those other people who are French-speaking, Spanish-speaking, or Chinese speaking. But these also constitute grammatical freemasonries, the members of which know one another as soon as they speak. Thus, grammar fulfills several roles in society. It enables us to communicate within certain geographic limits; it identifies us with a certain type of contemporary civilization; and since a language is not born all of a sudden but has evolved over thousands of years, it places us within a long historical stream of literary, philosophical and esthetic tradition.

Grammar would seem to provide a good analogy to understand what theology is supposed to do. For theology implies speaking about God; it is, in John Macquarrie's expression, "God-talk." Cardinal Newman already entitled one of his books, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*. Assent, or faith, follows a certain pattern which may be called, by analogy, a grammar. Theology also, as St Anselm's *faith seeking understanding*, must follow certain methods in order to be coherent; and these may be called a grammar. In a study of theological method—unfortunately published in French and presumably unknown to Paul Holmer—I have called theology a language and I have systematically analyzed its ingredients in terms of semantics and syntax, the fundamental dimensions of grammar. Likewise, much of what Bernard Lonergan wrote in *Method in Theology* can be read as outlining the grammar of theology. What Holmer tries to do in the present volume is, however, far from Newman's analysis of assent as the noetic aspect of faith and from my own investigation of theological method. For the reader is never sure what the author means by grammar. What he means by faith is not even very clear. It is not Newman's assent, which would seem to be too intellectual (somehow the author does not like intellectualism); it is not mere trust or confidence in being saved by Christ, as in popular but misleading accounts of Protestantism. Though never clearly defined or described, it seems to be a personal, lived attitude related to "belief and morals," such belief being centered on God, Christ and the Scripture. What Paul Holmer means by grammar is still more obscure: it seems to be something that one does not need to know as long as one applies its rules in speaking. Certainly no attempt is made to articulate its elements, rules, or structure. Grammar acts here rather as an undetermined negative principle. When the author wants to criticize a theology (which is often), he declares that it does not follow the grammar of faith.

The form of this book is that of a rambling discourse about sundry topics connected with theology: what theology is and does; belief; scientific language;

Today there is a veritable chorus of enthusiasts for work on the foundations of theology. The diagnoses are rather vague and several; and the prognoses are equally disquieting . . . The churches with their avid members are pictured as grand but ill-founded. In fact there are cracks everywhere. It is apparently thought that the serious people, usually very critical professors of profound subjects, have seen the cracks and have begun to worry about the foundations . . . Who are the specialists for God's creaking house?

—Paul L. Holmer,
The Grammar of Faith

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metaphysics; language again; concepts; atheism and theism; knowing God. For reasons that are alluded to rather than explained, Paul Holmer is against theology that claims to be scientific, against metaphysics, against both theism and atheism. He is against Karl Rahner, Karl Barth, Heidegger, Teilhard de Chardin and most modern authors. He is for knowing God, provided that one agrees with him that "God" is not a name, but a concept (as though a name did not necessarily express a concept). Since he claims St. Thomas Aquinas in favor of the opinion that "God" is not a name, I presume he is not acquainted with the long passages of the *Summa* about the names of God (which do include the name *Deus*).

Paul Holmer admits that "these essays are polemical" (p. xi). But although he believes that they are also "constructive," I regard them as entirely destructive of everything that has been called theology so far. "Theology is that interpretation and that game which we all must play if we are to refer our lives to God" (p. 9). "Theology tells us what Christianity is and what and who God and we are" (p. 14). Theology . . . "is the declaration of the essence of Christianity" (p. 19). "Theology tells us what faith is" (p. 19). "Theology answers the question—what is Christianity? But it tells us the answer by giving us order and priorities, the structure and morphology, of the Christian faith" (p. 20). How does one become a theologian? by becoming "Godly in all things, referring everything, our woes and weal, fears and joys, past and future, completely to God's love and care" (p. 19).

What is wrong with this approach is easy to see: when everything Christian is theology, then theology has ceased being a specific discipline of the believing mind; it has become a quality of all Christian life. In which case it is of course absurd to offer theology courses for credit and to make theology the topic of doctoral dissertations. We face once more the recurrent pietist temptation, that nothing is worthwhile in Christianity unless its effect is to warm the heart. The noetic and esthetic dimensions of human life are eaten up by its affective dimension. And so theology should give up its intellectual traditions. Esthetics and rhetoric are abandoned to their secular pursuits. Although Paul Holmer does not wish to advocate "a Christianity without theology or doctrines," which ends up by identifying faith with ethics or with "religious feelings" (p. 137), his own position is not far from identifying faith with religious feelings. The theology which he sponsors follows in fact a deceptively simple recipe: "The knack is to learn how to handle oneself and the whole world. When that is being learned, certain words, Biblical words, come into their own. They become the tools of refining and intensifying one's daily life, and they become increasingly meaningful as one lives with and by them" (p. 131). "To understand theology . . . is to be spurred, to be humiliated, to be stirred to contrition, to be prepared for joy" (p. 146), though not the joy of intellectual discovery. Good theology is not interested in "understanding" or "meanings" (p. 39). It is not "theory-laden" (p. 45). It is "free of offensive metaphysics" (p. 44), as though metaphysicians were particularly obnoxious persons. It is "not misled by analogies again" (p. xi), as though "grammar," in the book's title, were not itself an analogy. The task of theologians is "a kind of description of what is already achieved rather than an attempt to provide what is missing" (p. 132). The "true theologian . . . actually knows God" (p. 212).

While this sounds very pious, it is disastrous. The theologian who will follow the program advocated in this book will soon become a moron. And one cannot love God at the expense of one's humanity.

Paul Holmer began with the analogy of grammar. This was promising. But it has been badly exploited in favor of a plea for anti-intellectual theologizing along pietistic lines. I wonder if it is by accident that, in the course of the demonstration, standard English grammar has been badly mauled, with plural subjects going with singular verbs, *as though* followed by the indicative, and many such constructions. Is this a conspiracy against the two grammars of faith and of English?

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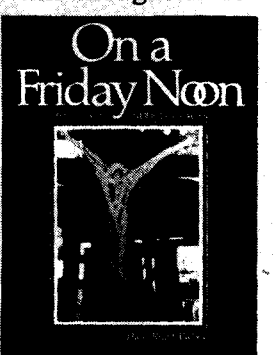

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In brief

THEOLOGY IN A NEW KEY, *by Robert McAfee Brown, Westminster $6.95, 212 pp.*

First of all, let's get our definitions straight. Liberation theology is that "mixture of Christianity and Marxism that has prompted some priests to doff their cassocks to join guerrilla bands" (*Times of the Americas*), which "cites the Bible as justification for social activism" (*N.Y. Times*), has "provided ecclesiastic writ for such secular activities as organizing trade unions and peasant movements" (*Economist*), and is the "divisive effort within the Latin church to make common cause with the region's disinherited" (*Washington Post*).

More, it is "a corrupt and self-serving mockery of Christianity, a propaganda machine for pragmatic Marxism and Christian Marxism's greatest weapon" (M. Martin); "a media event," a "rehash of German political theology" which "almost no one in Latin America takes seriously" but which is also "politically and ecclesiastically dangerous to the well-being of the people in the poor countries" (A. Greeley).

Still not satisfied? Then there's nothing to do but listen to the clear tones of McAfee Brown's orchestration of the liberation theology symphony. Using a variety of (mostly successful) musical conceits, Brown has completely succeeded in conveying the central content, orientation and methodology of the Latin American theologies of liberation.

The style, like the composer, is lucid and engaging, moving from consideration of the "established harmonies" of the social gospel/social teaching streams of the Protestant/Catholic traditions to the challenge presented these harmonies by the view from below, from the underside of history. In this view, theology, the act of critical reflection in the light of Scripture, is a "second moment," following on the engagement with concrete reality. This action (praxis) in turn flows from an analysis that, with the available (thus obligatory) tools of the social sciences, asserts and embraces the reality of social conflict rather than the illusion of social harmony. And the starting point for this theological task is people, specifically the majority—the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed. Theology begins "where the pain is."

Brown unpacks and de-jargonizes all that and much more in what will stand as the best North American introduction to the liberation theologies. If not fully satisfied after reading it, you will at least understand more than all the worthies cited above.

THOMAS E. QUIGLEY

THE REEL REVOLUTION: A FILM PRIMER ON LIBERATION, *by Neil P. Hurley, Orbis, $7.95, paper, 175 pp.*

What can you say about a book which demonstrates that "movies are liberating"? That films have not yet been "fully perceived as revolution." That beneath profitable escape films there is "a subtle but very real judgment on the larger society." That filmmakers are motivated—subconsciously, perhaps—by an "irrepressible urge to make enduring statements of profound significance on the human condition." Jesuit Neil P. Hurley says all this, and little more in his slim volume. Though it is doubtless true that because movies can so easily reach illiterates as well as literates, rich and poor, old and young alike, they can become, as Father Hurley points out, "a unique tool for 'consciousness-raising,' capable both of universal access and, also, depth of penetration in terms of education." However, the fact of the matter is that little liberation actually results from a trip to the movies. Even Father Hurley concedes this point: "As is often the case in media, those who go to hear or see an experience do so to reinforce their already existing beliefs." And there it is. More often than not, we seek out films that support our worldview rather than those which confront our personal or social values. Or else we just enjoy a movie, allowing it to entertain us, diverting our attention—momentarily—from routine anxieties. True, we empathize, are moved. But more than this, we believe, is pretentious prattle, the pastime of pedants who virtually squeeze from a film its lifeblood. While Father Hurley may see film as revolutionary, his point will go largely undetected by those queuing up to pay $4, $5 or $6 to see *Superman*. Had he directed his thesis to filmmakers, perhaps in a trade journal, or condensed his remarks to magazine length, he might have had more effect. In its present form, *The Reel Revolution* is strained and over-long.

MICHAEL F. McCAULEY

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REVIEWERS

FATHER RICHARD J. DILLON *is on the faculty of St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, N.Y.*

ROSEMARY H. BALSAM, M.D. *is a staff psychiatrist of the Yale Student Health Services.*

GEORGE WOODCOCK *is a Canadian author whose books include* Faces of India *and* Peoples of the Coast.

FATHER ROBERT W. HOVDA *is currently coordinator of the liturgical dimension, ministerial program at the Jesuit School of Theology in Chicago.*

FATHER GEORGE H. TAVARD *is a member of the faculty at Methodist Theological School in Ohio.*

THOMAS E. QUIGLEY *is on the staff of the Division of Latin America, U.S. Catholic Conference.*

MICHAEL F. McCAULEY *is executive editor of the newsletters published by the Thomas More Association.*

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Correspondence

(Continued from page 578)

unless they had a much lower opinion of the intelligence and sound instincts of the California electorate than I then possessed."

Upon re-reading the sentence I am inclined to agree with the judgment of my learned friend and to feel that it merits printing, not only however because of its merits as a model of literary composition, but because of the frightful image it conjures up of the possibility that Ronald Reagan might actually make it to the White House, as he made it to the Governor's Mansion in Sacramento.

The mere thought of such a possibility is enough to curdle the blood. I am afraid to consult the tea leaves. There stands the spectral image of Nixon as a warning not to overestimate "the intelligence and sound instincts" of the national electorate as I once did of the California electorate. And as though to remind me of what rare commodities intelligence and sound instinct are, not only among the electorate but among those propelled by their votes to high office, a photograph appeared the other day in the Paris *Herald Tribune* showing Henry Kissinger, to whom millions of massacred Cambodians are indebted for their tragic fate, entering the chambers of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is of course smiling, as he is always smiling when cameras are focused on him. In the background, beaming like school boys, thrilled to be photographed with their hero, the current Sultan of Swat, are two United States Senators whose names, for the sake of their posterity, I leave unmentioned. A sad reminder—and an explication, at least in part, of why I find it relatively easy to resist the pleas of my friends to return to the United States after ten years abroad.

(REV.) GEORGE H. DUNNE, S.J.

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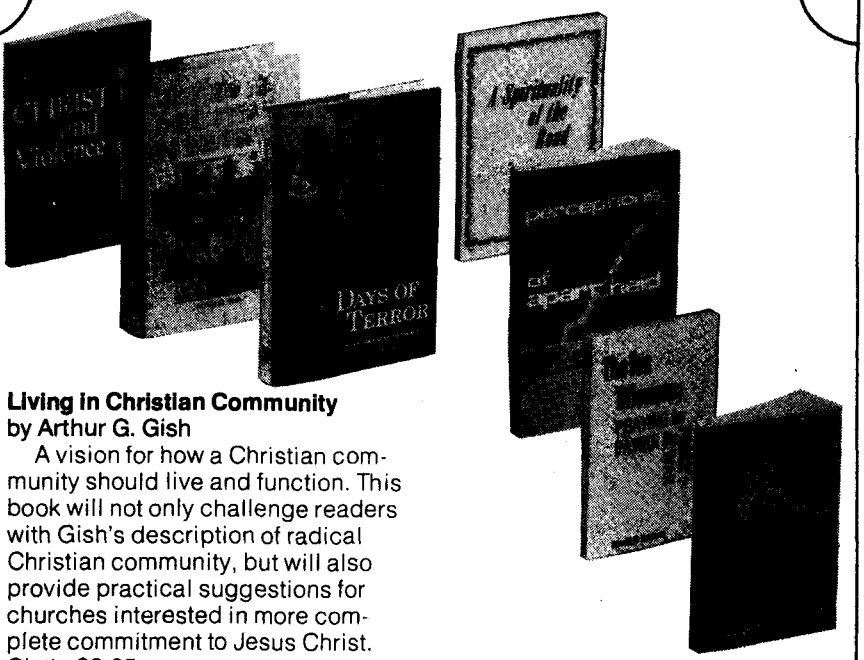

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